Hoops, Nets and Ballots: Investigating the Relationship Between Competitive Sport Socialization and Political Participation of Female Candidates.

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Abstract: Although more women are successfully breaching the social, economic and political barriers that can prevent them from participating as electoral candidates, few women campaign for elected office. A dearth of female candidates may be understandable, given research demonstrating that women tend to avoid competition and competitive environments. Thus, elections – competitive by design – may attract fewer women than men. This thesis posits that the inherent competitiveness of electoral politics may deter women from campaigning for office. However, this work also forwards that competitive sport socialization during adolescence may prepare women for electoral competition. This paper examines the results of a self-administered survey mailed to 449 female candidates for municipal office. The survey investigated candidates' adolescent experiences in competitive sports and attitudes relating to internal political efficacy. The results appear to demonstrate a strong correlation between competitive sport socialization and either positive or neutral evaluations of political competition.

A work of this nature requires the inspiration, guidance, motivation and input from a variety of people. First, I must thank Dr. Linda Trimble, who opened my eyes to difference and initiated my desire to hear other voices in our society. I also extend my gratitude to the subjects who participated in the survey, as their voices are really the foundation of this research. My friends and colleagues also deserve much credit due to their support and advice on this project, not to mention the many distracting – but required - coffee breaks. Finally, I thank my parents, Marilyn and Lewis, for their proofreading skills, their love and for showing me that an education is the best tool for eradicating injustice and inequality in the world. This is a legacy that surpasses all others.

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Above all, I extend my deepest gratitude to my family. Thank you, Kiyomi and Taiga, for not complaining during those moments when I focused on my education and was unable to play with you. Your hugs and kisses were the motivation I needed to complete this work. To my spouse, Arlene; your tender words of encouragement, nearly a decade ago, were the sparks that ignited my passion for learning. Without you, this work would not have been possible as you supported and encouraged me with tremendous patience and love, sacrificing much for my studies. For all this, I am eternally grateful!

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List of Abbreviations

A.A.M.D.C. ….. Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
A.C.R.A. ……... Alberta Capital Region Alliance
A.M.A.H. …….. Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing
A.M.O. ….……. Association of Ontario Municipalities
A.U.M.A. …….. Alberta Urban Municipality Association
B.C.…….……… British Columbia
C.A. …….…….. Census Agglomerations
C.F.L.R.I. …….. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute
C.M.A. ….……. Census Metropolitan Area
C.R.O. ….……... Chief Returning Officer
F.C.M. ….……... Federation of Canadian Municipalities
F.P.T.P. …….….. First-Past-the-Post
M.P. ….……….. Member of Parliament
P.E.I. ….………. Prince Edward Island
P.R. …….……… Proportional Representation
S.E.S. ….……… Socioeconomic Status
S.M.P. ...….…… Single Member Plurality
S.P.S.S. …….…. Statistical Program for Social Sciences
U.B.C.M …….... Union of British Columbia Municipalities
U.N.S.M. ….…… Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

Chapter 1: Introduction

The French-born writer, Anaïs Nin wrote, "My ideas usually come not at my desk writing, but in the midst of living" (Nin, 1975). This thesis was born out of "the midst of living," as a conspiracy of unrelated events on a single day unwrapped this author's curiosity. On one September morning, a literature review of self-efficacy theories resulted in the 'discovery' that a theory supporting the development of political efficacy, is also a foundation of efficacy research into competitive behaviours of female athletes. The link between these apparently unrelated fields is the work of eminent sociologist, Alberta Bandura. With this observation in mind, the next task of the day involved a review of the article *Women (Not) in Politics* (Young, 2001), which discusses reasons for the dearth of female participation in electoral politics. Two salient points of Young's work were her discussions of the participatory barriers that prevent women from becoming candidates and the fact that fewer women are elected, in part, because fewer women campaign for office. The latter point would become significant to this project.

Young's (2001) mention of the scarcity of female candidates precipitated the third event of that day. Given that fall 2007 was the triennial General Municipal Elections in Alberta, Young's statement could be tested through a scrutiny of campaign signage along 16 kilometers of main roadways and across four wards, in the City of Edmonton. A plethora of signs advertising male candidates dotted most available spaces, whereas campaign signage for only one female candidate was evident over the same distance. While observing all these campaign signs, it was also noted that the behaviour and competitiveness of election campaigns mimic the behaviour and competitiveness of sports; that is, electoral politics are competitive events and we draw upon sport metaphors

and imagery to describe competitive politics. This final mental notation created a synergy

between the three unrelated events, leading to two questions. First, does competitive sport

experience strengthen political competitiveness? Intuitively, the immediate answer was

'no' as personal experiences in politics indicated that most male politicians were not

stereotypical athletes and that the competitive political behaviour of male politicians

generally appeared as a 'natural instinct' within most participants.[i] However, given the

research, readings and observations of that day, it was less evident that this would also

apply to female political elites. Thus, the second question initiated this research: Does

competitive sport experience strengthen political competitiveness in female candidates?

There is academic research that would immediately indicate that female candidates

might require some form of competitive socialization. Electoral politics is competitive

and we tend to use images of sports and violence to discuss and describe political activity.

Yet, there is research that identifies our tendency to socialize girls in noncompetitive

behaviours and away from competitive situations (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007). Other

research indicates that women tend to be as politically knowledgeable as men, but they

tend to be less interested in electoral politics and usually express their political

participation in the more cooperative venues of the civic community (Gidengil et al.,

2004). Furthermore, traditional arguments explaining the dearth of female politicians

usually point to economic and social barriers that may prevent women from participating

as candidates. However, if we consider these arguments in the context of competitive

socialization, then we begin to recognize the similarities between the developmental

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[i] The author has over 20 years of electoral political experience: volunteer, advisor and manager on partisan and local campaigns; Chief of Staff (Alberta Liberal Caucus); City Councillor (Lethbridge, Alberta).

process of political efficacy and the developmental process of competitive efficacy for female athletes. This raises a more foundational question: Do female politicians have competitive socialization experiences that allow them to minimize the competitive, framed and gendered discourse of male-dominated electoral politics? The information and observations gleaned that September day led this author to speculate that female political elites may require competitive socialization that prepares them for the male-centric competitiveness of electoral politics.

Research Question and Thesis Statement

The purpose of this research is to explore the potential of a relationship between competitive socialization and attitudes towards political competition, in female political elites. However, since competitive socialization is a broad idea, I narrowed the scope of the research to specifically investigate competitive socialization through adolescent sport. Although competitive behaviour can occur in other activities, such as academia, arts or familial organization, these areas would be more open to subjective interpretations of "competition" or "competitiveness" by respondents. Given the diversity of these experiences, it also makes the measurability of competitiveness more challenging. By contrast, examining competitive sport experiences creates a research environment that is measurable in both the access to sport opportunities and the levels of sport participation, as well as a relatively consistent application and understanding of competition and competitiveness. Additionally, given the similarities between the language used in both sport and political discourse, the socialization and general behaviour of competitive sport appears related to electoral politics. Therefore, the research question is: Do female

politicians have competitive sport experiences during their adolescence and, if so, did such experiences socialize competitive behaviour?

A relationship between sport and electoral politics for female political elites may not appear evident. However, if we consider the various conditions that inform and link the two activities, then such a relationship becomes possible. Although I demonstrate these conditions in the following chapters, a broad summary of each helps one understand the direction of the research. First, competitive behaviour requires socialization. Even though the necessary skills for any competition will vary across activities (for example, puck handling versus a job interview), competitiveness requires certain performance behaviours that are consistent, regardless of the means of competition. Second, we tend to use specific language to describe and discuss competitive sport behaviour and events. Women with sport socialization and an interest in becoming a candidate for office may find an element of familiarity within political discourse, since the two domains have a mediated linguistic relationship. Third, self-efficacy beliefs developed through sport may overlap and potentially strengthen the efficacious beliefs necessary for political participation. The principles of social learning theory can contribute to self-efficacy development that could, in turn, compliment and inform performance behaviour across competitive experiences. With these base conditions in mind, the argument is that women with socialization experiences in competitive sport during their adolescence ought to minimize (or even disregard) the competitiveness of electoral politics when they consider campaigning for office. Restated as a thesis statement: Competitive sport experiences during adolescence socialize appropriate competition behaviours necessary for future

political participation.

Electoral Competition

Electoral competition is the heart of a participatory democracy. Within the established guidelines of our electoral systems, citizens compete against each other, expending resources to secure votes from electors, for the sole purpose of being elected. Our elections are about choosing a campaign 'winner' (Cross, 2004). Once elected, representatives continue to compete for resources for their constituents, whether the resource is a policy objective or a tangible good. Effectively, our political culture is such that electoral politics is about the competition for resources: money, human capital, ideological dominance and votes. However, in recognizing that fewer women than men serve in office, we expose the fact that fewer women than men compete for office (Young, 2001; Erickson, 1991). Certainly, the history of women in Canada is fraught with examples of legal, social, political and economic barriers to their political participation (Olsen, 2002: 137-41; Bashevkin, 1993, 2009). Some of these barriers remain in our society, which may contribute to a lower rate of female competitors. Since the 1980s, access and achievement in higher education, professional work accomplishments and growing economic independence have helped many women overcome most of the economic and social barriers (Kimball, 2004). Women participate in, and achieve more from, other social and economic venues of our society. Why, then, are they not choosing to participate in electoral politics at relatively equal rates or with equal vigour? If the goal is to have more women elected to office, then the portal into electoral politics is the election campaign. Thus, one barrier to political participation appears to be competition.

The competitive behaviour necessary to compete for elected office appears to be at odds with the socialized nature of women, which may indicate that electoral competition itself could be a barrier to female participation.

If the conditions outlined immediately above prove valid, then the reality may be that many women do consider electoral politics as a way of expressing their civic duty. If the theoretical premises hold true, then most of them might choose to not become involved in electoral politics because their competitive socialization directs them to avoid competition and conflict. The hyper-competitive masculinity of electoral politics may simply be overwhelming for anyone – male or female – who is not comfortable in a competitive, aggressive or quasi-hostile environment. Thus, a competition barrier may prove daunting for women who wish to participate as elected officials, perhaps causing them to consider other options for civic participation. In effect, the competitiveness inherent in politics may be turning away competent and capable female candidates. If this is the case, then this research could address one aspect of the larger considerations of participatory democracy.

Why this research matters

One could argue that our present electoral political institutions and representative democracy work, given that women serve in the House and Senate, are representatives in provincial legislatures and are part of most municipal councils. As such, women are presently represented so why concern ourselves with increasing their presence in elected office? Perhaps the dearth of women elected to office demonstrates that women show less interest in politics than men (Gidengil et al., 2004: 52). Perhaps women do not campaign

for office because they simply do not care to participate in the male-centric domain of electoral politics (Verba et al., 1997). If women are choosing to stay out of election campaigns, then why should we change a system that seems to work? Of course, the premise of these questions is that electoral participation is a personal choice and that individuals will make a rational decision to campaign for office, if they are so inclined. However, what if the system is the reason for the dearth of female representatives in office? If most women are repulsed by the competitiveness of electoral politics, then few may campaign for office. Unfortunately, when one group of citizens cannot or do not participate in electoral politics, it undermines the essence of representative democracy.

One way to measure the strength of a democracy is to examine its collection of elected representatives, studying the accuracy with which the political elite physically and ideologically reflects the polity they represent. If we catalogue specific traits about elected representatives - their socioeconomic status (s.e.s.), race, religion, ethnicity, gender, et cetera - we can create a composite picture of the legislative body that will either resemble or betray the same traits among citizens. For example, are the representatives richer or poorer than the people? Do elected officials have approximately the same education as the population? Do the racial, cultural and spiritual traits of representatives accurately reflect many of the same traits within the larger society? The answers to these questions ought to underscore issues of representative equality or inequality within elected bodies. Viewing a legislative body in this manner could help identify under represented or non-represented citizens, thereby developing effective strategies that could increase their participation in electoral politics.

These differences are representative of our nuanced diversity as human beings, and generally reflect variations in our interests, our goals, and our life ambitions. Yet, these interests, goals and ambitions vary from person to person, making each member of a polity unique in her or his democratic needs and wants. However, since legislative assemblies are physically finite institutions, no democratic body can perfectly represent the diversity within its citizenry. That fact, though, ought not limit our desire to expand represented identities beyond the current composition of most elected assemblies. As a mind exercise, it is certainly possible to imagine a House of Commons filled with Members of Parliament (MPs) who roughly approximate the myriad of citizen identities. The reality is that physically accomplishing such a feat would prove too daunting, given the limits of a representative democracy. However, it is not too great a leap to expect our democratic legislatures to be representative of the diversity in our most basic characteristic of human identity: our sex. For an elected assembly to begin to be representative of difference, a legislature ought to comprise women and men at rates relative to the population. Equitable rates of representation would physically reflect the polity, but it would also hold the potential to broaden the scope of ideas presented in policy debates, as women and men have differing experiences within society. Thus, the representative equity of sexed identities is the foundation on which a democracy can build more nuanced representational diversity. However, if our legislative bodies do not adequately reflect the basic demographic image of the polity, then are we truly a representative democracy? There are two reasons why we must answer 'no.'

First, women are not "a monolithic group with uniform policy interests" (Trimble

and Tremblay, 2003: 40). Like men, women do not act with a single mind, nor do they unilaterally support any singular policy issue or political program. Despite the fact that women tend to support political parties traditionally on the left of the political spectrum, women hold memberships in, donate to, and vote for, all political parties (Gidengil et al., 2006). Some women rally around antifeminist movements, like *R.E.A.L. Women*, while others place their energies into pursuing greater legal and substantive equality. Women also carry other identities that may strengthen or hinder their respective roles in society. There is social cachet in having a professional identity, such as a physician, lawyer or engineer, but women of colour or differing ethnicity may experience the stigma of prejudice. Thus, to consider women as a homogenous, like-minded group would be as much a fallacy as believing there is no diversity within the opinions of men. This diversity underscores the second reason for needing more women in elected office.

The second reason for encouraging more women to participate in electoral politics is to expand the representational diversity of the polity. If we begin with the premise that democratic institutions ought to reflect the diverse ideas of the polity, then having more female representatives ought to achieve this goal. In her work, *Dealing with Difference*, Phillips (1994) argues that more women in elected office would mean that legislatures would consider a broader range of ideas in policy and program development. Specifically, more women involved in legislative debate would move issues traditionally associated with the private sphere of women's lives (colloquially stated as "women's issues") into the public sphere of policy deliberation. The 'different' views presented by female politicians ought to add to the intellectual diversity of debate, which would drastically

expand the knowledge base from which elected assemblies currently tend to operate (Phillips, 1994). Phillips believes that this *politics of ideas* exists within the current paradigm: it does not matter who represents the idea since "the role of the politician is to carry the message" (1994:75).

Phillips also argues that the politics of ideas cannot be the extent of female representation in a parliament. For her, there is no replacement for the experience of the representative: "the shared experience here takes precedence over shared ideas; more precisely, no amount of thought or sympathy, no matter how careful or honest, can jump the barriers of experience" (Phillips, 1994: 75). Having more women in the legislature (the *politics of presence*) has the benefit of turning the issue of representative diversity – be it by gender, race, ethnicity, et cetera – into a genuine debate of democratic interest and concern (Phillips, 1995). Having more women elected to office would begin to address the idea of difference, becoming the springboard for further diversification of elected identities. Therefore, if the goal is to enhance the diversity of our representative democracy, then this research matters because it examines a potential barrier to female participation in electoral politics. Given that the research appears to identify a strong correlation between competitive socialization and political participation, it is my hope that society can find ways to remove the competition obstacle, thereby encouraging more women to campaign for office. Regardless of how this is achieved, Phillips' (1994) argument remains: more women in office can only improve democratic representation.

The Argument

In Canada, fewer women than men serve in elected office. This has been the

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reality of our elected bodies since women won the franchise approximately 90 years ago

and it continues into this century. Since gaining franchise, a disproportionately small

percentage of women have been elected to federal, provincial or territorial office.[ii]

Between 1917 and 1969, only 63 women served as an elected representatives in a federal

or provincial legislature (Trimble & Arscott, 2003: 31, 165; Trimble and Arscott, 2009a).

Note that most women who campaigned for office between 1917 and the mid-1930s,

chose to campaign for federal and provincial legislatures far more than local councils, a

trend that has reversed over the past three decades (Armour and Staton, 1990). Although

Trimble (1995) argues that municipal office tends to be more accessible for women than

other political venues, no woman served on a municipal council in Canada until 1936.

Female representation in the House of Commons did not increase dramatically until the

early 1970s, which coincided with the period when Canadian women were achieving

higher education and competing more for male-dominated occupations (Krahn, Lowe and

Hughes, 2007, p. 172-3). Concurrent with academic and labour market changes was the

Second Wave feminist movement that raised media and legislative awareness of gender

and sex inequality. Even as the 1970s witnessed an increase in the number of women

campaigning for office, such increases were proportionate to either the growth in the

number of legislative seats or the change in population demographics. A significant

increase in female representatives in the House of Commons and provincial legislatures

did not occur until the mid-1980s (Trimble & Arscott, 2003).

Currently, Canadian women compose 52% of the Canadian population but occupy

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[ii] From this point forward, references to "federal and provincial" political institutions or structures, implies the inclusion of "the Territories" unless otherwise indicated.

only 21.2% of all seats in federal and provincial assemblies (Trimble and Arscott, 2009b).[iii] This national average has never surpassed 25%, leading scholars to refer to it as the "electoral glass ceiling" (Bashevkin, 2009; Trimble and Arscott, 2003). Although agencies such as *Equal Voice Canada* and *One Woman One Vote* strive for representative equity between sexes, a benchmark of "at least 30-35% in decision-making bodies" is generally accepted as a minimum presence where female representatives can "have a visible impact on the style and content of political decisions" (UNCSW, 1995). The idea of a "critical mass" for female decision-makers was first suggested by Kanter (1977) who adapted critical mass theory of nuclear physics to suggest that a minimum percentage of women were required to effect organizational changes in corporations. Dahlerup (1988) applied Kanter's thesis to women in politics and demonstrated that a "move from a small to large minority" can affect positive changes in public perceptions of female representatives (295-6). Canada still remains well below this critical mass as the 28 federal and provincial elections held between 2002 and 2007 placed women in only 20.9% of all seats (Trimble and Arscott, 2009b). In other words, of the possible 2142 seats available during this period, only 447 women have had the privilege to represent their constituents. For Canadian women, a disparity remains between female representation and the female population.

  Obviously, the contrary result is that men dominate electoral politics, as they hold approximately 77% of the seats in all federal, provincial and local political institutions

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[iii] As of 8 November 2008. Percentages vary in each jurisdiction: Highest Province: Manitoba (30%). Lowest Province: New Brunswick (13%) House of Commons (20%). (Trimble and Arscott, 2009b).

(Trimble and Arscott, 2009b; F.C.M., 2009).[iv] If we return to the premise that a democratic society should have its representatives reflect the polity, then representational equity by sex is a place to start investigating ways to improve representative diversity. The investigation could begin with the question, "Why do we elect fewer women than men to office?" The immediate answer is predominantly statistical: we elect fewer women because fewer women than men campaign for elected office (Erickson, 1991; Young, 2001). Fewer women on a ballot means fewer chances for women to achieve election. Therefore, a more practical question ought to be: why do fewer women than men campaign for office? The response may lead us again to participatory barriers.

As discussed above, there is extensive literature that examines the barriers women face in their desire to serve in office, with low participatory rates blamed on various social, economic and political obstacles that can, and often do, prevent women from participating as candidates (for example, see: Brodie, 1985; Bashevkin, 1985; 2009; Trimble and Arscott, 2003; O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006). Barriers include social, structural and organization conditions, such as gender prejudice, limited access to financial and social resources, institutional biases and reproductive and familial responsibilities. Still, other research demonstrates that many women simply have a lower interest in electoral politics, which may provide another reason why few women enter election campaigns (for example, see: Pammett and LeDuc, 2003). However, these arguments appear to contradict an emerging social order, as the last 30 years has

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[iv] The statistics provided by Trimble and Arscott's Still Counting website was last updated on 8 November 2008. Although this includes the current figures for the House of Commons, it reflects the provincial and territorial legislatures of that year and does not currently address the changes that occurred in 2009 provincial elections. By contrast, the statistics from F.C.M. are current as of November 2009.

experienced changes in women's access and control over their social conditions in education, work, family and the economy. Many of these changes have fundamentally improved women's right of entry to greater personal, social and financial freedom, resulting in some positive social and economic reforms, both legally and culturally imposed.[v]

Compared to previous generations, women are achieving higher levels of education, and obtain more professional designations. Females now comprise the majority of the labour force and many have greater access to increased economic resources and social status in occupations that were never available to their foremothers. Three decades of access to affordable and manageable birth control have also provided women with greater control over their sexuality and reproductive capacity, thus extending their independence in a work environment and affording them the additional time to pursue community participation (Pinker, 2009). Policy initiatives, such as the *Royal Commission on the Status of Women*, have resulted in some legislative changes and given more legal equality for women, although not without the occasional struggle against male legislators (Anderson, 1991). Presently, many women experience greater freedoms and have more access to the personal, social and financial conditions to participate in political office. Yet few women place their name on a ballot.

It is important to note that an increase in legal and substantive equality has not necessarily translated into greater access to the political resources required for election campaigns. More women serve in the labour force, but they still tend to earn

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[v] Although the past three decades of social change have been generally positive for women, it is important to remember that women still face barriers and prejudice in our society.

approximately $0.72 for each dollar earned by a man in the same occupation, and they still tend to hold the majority of part-time work in the labour force (A.C.T.E.W., 2007; Krahn, Lowe and Hughes, 2007). Some women reach the upper echelons of corporations, but few serve on a Board of Directors (Bashevkin, 2009). The responsibilities associated with a woman's reproductive capabilities, such as biological fatigue of carrying a fetus to term and postpartum duties, may limit participation in community activities, thereby removing opportunities to acquire social and financial capital. Even the social stigma attached to gender roles can restrict a woman's access to elected office and influence her own considerations about campaigning (Bashevkin, 2009).

Party gatekeepers also play an integral role in limiting access to potential candidates, especially in the competitive or winnable ridings where the belief may be that a male candidate *may* be better suited for the role (Carty and Eagles, 2005). Where men will often unilaterally seek out a nomination for office, women tend to be more inclined to wait until others approach them about candidacy than to step forward and submit their name (Cross, 2004; Lawless and Fox, 2005). Men also tend to consider their social capital as a political commodity for achieving office. By contrast, women tend to gather tremendous political knowledge and political capital through civic participation, but few convert these experiences and resources into political capital (Putnam, 2000; O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006). Considered thus, social, economic and political inequalities still exist for women, but are more surmountable today than in previous generations. Social, economic and political barriers can no longer totally explain why few women campaign for office, since an increasing number of women are able to navigate around them. However, if we

consider the whole institution of electoral politics, a common thread weaves itself

through its various facets: the necessity for competitive behaviour.

Electoral politics are inherently competitive, due mostly to partyism, the electoral

system and our parliamentary structure. We organize our federal and provincial politics

around political parties. As such, party members first compete against each other to be the

party's representative in the riding. Once nominated, they then compete against other

party candidates, vying for voter support and the ultimate objective of becoming elected.

In Canada, we select representatives through an electoral system called *Single Member*

Plurality (S.M.P.), colloquially known as *First-Past-the-Post* (F.P.T.P.). S.M.P. is a

"winner-take-all" system where the largest plurality of support means electoral victory, a

process that tends to emphasize competition over cooperation (Courtney, 2007). In short,

S.M.P. is a highly competitive system for choosing a "winner" (the elected

representative), while clearly identifying the "losers" (everyone else). Once in office, the

representative must continue to compete against other elected officials - regardless of

Party identification - for limited resources and limited opportunities to advance desired

policies. Certainly, the competitive and adversarial nature of the Westminster

Parliamentary system enhances and entrenches the assumed necessity for competitive

behaviour within electoral politics. If the Member successfully achieves and applies

acquired resources to his or her constituency, then they may strengthen their competitive

position for the next election. Thus, the competitiveness of the electoral cycle continues.[vi]

[vi] By contrast, consensual Parliamentary systems (such as most forms of proportional representation) tend to operate under a dynamic of cooperation and consensus among elected representatives. For further discussion, see: Lijphart A. 1999. *Thinking About Democracy: Power Sharing and Majority Rule in Theory and Practice*. New York, NY: Routledge. 111-24.

Given the "institutional context in which political life unfolds" the electoral system, parties and parliamentary competition all permeate our language, cultural representations and interpretations of electoral politics (Bateman and Meyers, 2008: 217). We must also recognize that much of this discourse occurs in a masculine or *male-as-norm* narrative, which socializes our opinions and impressions of "normal" political behaviour. The socialization process can create a political culture of hyper-competitive masculinity in political behaviour, where images of sport, aggression and war tend to provide the analogies, metaphors and descriptors of political behaviour. Certainly, using analogies of competition to describe political events can simplify political activities and improve one's understanding of the often-overlapping policy positions of politicians. Such metaphors also add literary colour to an otherwise relatively drab discussion of ideological perspectives. However, there may be a corollary affect when we articulate politics in this manner.

To frame politics in sport analogies could result in citizens feeling separated from the political process. Citizens who neither identify with the male-as-normal context nor experienced competitive sport socialization may view political activity as irrelevant to their daily activities. The thesis rests partly on the foundation of this separation; our political language and institutions have transformed electoral politics into a domain of hyper-competitive masculinity. As a result, members of the polity who are neither familiar nor comfortable with either domain may have negative sentiments or feelings towards competitiveness, a behaviour they would undoubtedly have to embrace if they campaigned for office. In turn, this could negatively affect their decision to participate as

a candidate. In the context of this thesis, the very act of competing may be a barrier that prevents women from choosing to campaign for office. Therefore, if the economic, social and political conditions do not apply equally to all women, then we ought to explore other conditions that may prevent women from campaigning for office.

To investigate why fewer women than men campaign for office, I have chosen to examine the issue from the opposite side of the same question: if fewer women campaign for office than men, then who are the women who choose to be candidates? What is it about their desire to participate in electoral politics that separates them from other women? What quality or trait do female political elites have that encourages them to be candidates. There is no doubt political institutions can keep women from achieving upper level positions in politics, but what part of the institution is a barrier to women considering office? The scope of possible answers is broad, as reasons for participation could lie in a variety of factors: issues of efficacy, the ability to overcome identifiable barriers to participation, systemic and institutionalized patriarchy, or biological and familial responsibilities. Obviously, tackling the problem from several vantage points is neither efficient nor possible, given the limits of the present work. Finding an answer required a single starting point and focused approach. As such, this research examines the issue in the context of one component of the electoral process: competition.

There is one final consideration to note. Women do participate in our electoral politics. As in any other free and democratic system, the choice to participate is an individual one. Some may feel that this idea of exercising choice is a fundamental part of our democratic rights. However, if we truly examine the participation of women as

candidates in electoral politics, then we must identify the inherent flaws, biases and barriers that tend to prevent their involvement. If anything, women's electoral participation in Canada appears to be less about the choice to participate and more about the ability to participate free from social, economic and political constraints (Bashevkin, 2009; Pinker, 2009). Many barriers and constraints have lingered since the franchise even though recent decades have seen some advances in local representation and increased political involvement. Reality demonstrates that women are neither equally present nor equitably represented in political office as men. A brief review of the past century demonstrates the advances for, and challenges against, female participation in both electoral politics. Following this is a similar presentation of the advances and challenges women faced in developing opportunities in competitive sports in Canada. What the reader ought to note are the similarities between electoral politics and competitive sport, especially considering a women's ability to participate in either activity.

Women as Representatives

While the Suffragette Movement of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries fought for and achieved the franchise for women, their Movement also ensured that women would serve as elected representatives. In Canada, as in most democracies, the first female representatives tended to be Suffragettes as their activism gave these otherwise invisible citizens a local profile. However, once women achieved the franchise, there was no longer a single issue around which women could coalesce. Understandably, the result was that women of this period remained active in social causes, but those causes - most often education, temperance, and homelessness - tended to fall outside the

Table 1: Percentage of Women Elected to Municipal Councils (International), 2007.	
Country	**% of Women on Municipal Councils**
Chile	48
Sweden	42
Bolivia	34
Finland	31
United Kingdom	27
Canada	21.7
Source: MacLean, 2006.	

Table 2: Percentage of women elected as Mayor or Councilor, Canada, 2002 and 2009.		
	Mayor	**Councilor**
2002	12.1	21.0
2009	15.0	24.0
Source: F. C. M., 2009.		

purview of state responsibilities until after WWII. Inevitably, there grew a divide between the political affairs of men (viewed as concerns of the state) and the political affairs of women (viewed as concerns of society), a dichotomy that kept many women from participating as candidates (Baxter and Lansing, 1993). This had the effect of reducing the electoral candidacy of women which limited, and in some cases eliminated, the presence of female representatives in Canadian legislatures over the next fifty years.

By the 1980s, the real growth in women's representative presence came in municipal venues, especially in Canadian cities. Throughout the decade, between 25% and 37% of city councilors were women in British Columbia, the Territories and the prairies (Trimble, 1995, p. 99), although overall percentages were lower when factoring

in rural municipalities. Even though the number of women elected to local office

dramatically increased between 1970 and 2000, the average percentage of women elected

remains between 20 to 25 percent. Table 1 demonstrates that Canada ranks well behind

other nations in the number of women serving on municipal councils. Table 2

demonstrates that a minor gain in percentage representation occurred between 2002 and

2009, even though the actual number equates to only 5,486 women serving in a possible

24,758 mayoralty and councilor positions (F.C.M., 2009).

The outlook is not all bleak. By 2009, the three Territories and the province of

British Columbia had all surpassed the 30% barrier of female representatives serving on

municipal councils.[vii] However, only Yukon has managed to surpass the same threshold

for female mayors, with 38% (Source: F.C.M., 2009). What remains unknown in

municipal data is the actual number of women who campaigned for local office. Only

B.C. and P.E.I. report this statistic. Over a period of two election cycles, female

candidates for local office comprised only 18.7% of all candidates (*CivicInfo BC*, 2009;

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 2009). Whether we accept this as

an approximate cross-Canada average is open for debate. Knowing an average female

participation rate across Canada would provide us with better insight and analysis into the

gender gap in electoral involvement. However, when considering all levels of

representation in Canada, today we find that female politicians are less than 10% of all

elected officials (Trimble & Arscott, 2003, p.165). If, as Erickson (1991) and Young

(2001; 2009) demonstrate, fewer women than men campaign for office, then this plateau

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[vii] The three Territories, B.C., P.E.I. and New Brunswick have all surpassed the 30% threshold in the number of women elected to rural councils. However, only Yukon and B.C. have achieved this threshold for women on urban councils (F.C.M., 2009).

may remain constant. Therefore, raising the number of candidates offers the potential to increase the number of women elected to office. Following from the thesis, if we can encourage greater participation in girls' competitive sports, we may reap the benefits in our participatory democracy and see more women campaign for office. However, the past century of women's sport in Canada has also experienced many roadblocks to participation.

Women as Competitive Athletes

Throughout much of the Twentieth Century, women had limited access to formal, organized competitive sports (Feltz et al., 2008: 116; Hall, 2002; Hall and Richardson, 1982). Canadian society generally accepted that competitive sports were appropriate only for boys, since sports were based upon traits considered exclusively masculine: "strength, speed and power" (Morrow et al., 1989: p. 230; Hall and Richardson, 1982). This dominant notion of masculinity controlled the development of girls' sports, supported by the belief that the stress and physicality of competition was inappropriate for femininity and detrimental to female reproductive organs (Morrow et al. 1989; Hall, 2002). As opportunities arose for girls to participate in competitive sports, gender notions led to the development of "girls rules" that were designed to protect the reproductive capacity of females, address their apparent limited strength, and maintain their femininity (Hall and Richardson, 1982). This was not an attitude unique to Canada, as the Maritimes and the central provinces merely mimicked American policy trends and attitudes. Adopting this attitude actually led to two similar yet distinctive paths for girls' sport in Canada: competitive sport opportunities for girls occurred either through the education system or

through the local community.

Most educators in eastern and central Canada adopted the American philosophy

towards female sports; girls' sports were about "advocating play for play's sake, the

intrinsic value of play, controlled publicity, training women leaders, and minimizing

travel and commercialization" (Morrow et al., 1989: p.232). Consequently, girls' sports in

schools tended to be void of competition, and rarely offered more than intramural

programs, thus placing female sports on a different path than male sports. Morrow et al.

(1989) summarized the issue:

> Thus rules were modified. Only women coaches and women's referees could lead,
> and separate women's organizations to set policies and procedures, to organize,
> conduct, and control girls' sport, were advocated to protect the female athlete
> from the abuses found in the men's games. This led to half a century of separate
> programs for boys and girls, men and women, in educational settings […] and
> fostered a separate sport philosophy for women. (232-3)

This philosophy was not prevalent in all regions as educators in rural Ontario and western

Canada did not follow the American ideals. In these regions, men coached, officiated and

helped establish policy for female sports. Additionally, girls' teams competed against

other schools and communities, most often under "boys rules" (Morrow et al., 1989; Hall,

2002; Hall and Richardson, 1982). Eventually, community programs in the urban centres

of eastern and central Canada implemented this approach to girls' sport, which led to a

division of attitudes between the educators and community organizers. Although the

education system did much to "perpetuate the opinion that girls were unable physically to

play the game and needed to be protected from possible injury" through the use of "girls'

rules" (Morrow et al., 1989: p. 233), the conflicting philosophies eventually forced

educators to drop these rules and expand the competitive opportunities for young women.

The "Golden Age of Sport for Canadian women" (Morrow et al., 1989: p. 236) occurred between the 1920s and the 1940s (Prentice et al., 1988; Hall, 2002). During this period, community organizations began to offer formal competitive sports programs for young girls, which had the effect of rapidly expanding opportunities for girls and women in amateur sports. Greater participation also translated into Olympic success as proven by the "Matchless Six," the 1928 Canadian women's track team who won a number of medals (Hall, 2002). In many sports, females competed under "girls' rules" especially in track events, baseball, field hockey and basketball (Prentice et al., 1988: p. 272). Incorporating "girls' rules" was justified by the argument that women were smaller and weaker than men which would therefore require downsizing most aspects of the sport, such as the playing area, distances, equipment, contact or playing time. In reality, these changes were intended to maintain the femininity of the athletes, protect their reproductive capacity and to control aggressive competition and behaviours (Prentice et al., 1988: p. 272). Many of these rules and modifications remain today, even though there is no scientific justification for imposing different conditions on female athletes.

The onset of World War II ended most of the competitive sport opportunities for young women, and the postwar era reemphasized traditional gender-roles – especially notions of femininity – which, again, limited girls' access to competitive sports (Prentice et al., 1988; Morrow et al., 1989; Hall and Richardson, 1982). From the late 1940s until the 1970s, opportunities for competitive sports experience for girls remained relatively static (Macintosh et al., 1987; Prentice et al., 1988). However, the 1970 *Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* revealed the second-class status of

women and described many of the challenges women faced in Canadian society (Canada, 1970; Macintosh et al., 1987; Prentice et al., 1988; Trembley and Andrew, 1997). Although the *Report* predominantly dealt with women's equality of opportunity in conjunction with legal, legislative and governance aspects of society (Trembley and Andrew, 1997), two recommendations pertained to sports and "were directed at the lack of equal opportunity for girls in school sports programs" (Hall, 2002, p. 166). However, education was (and remains) a provincial jurisdiction, which left the provinces to create individual solutions, if they so decided. Unfortunately, provincial leadership on the issue waned throughout the 1970s, leaving provincial Human Rights Commissions as the only avenue for girls to appeal their exclusion from playing on boys' teams (Macintosh et al., 1987; Morrow et al., 1989; Hall, 2002: p. 163).

It was not until 1980 that the situation improved for female sports in Canada (Macintosh et al. 1987; Hall and Richardson, 1982; Morrow et al., 1989; Hall, 2002). That year, *Sport Canada* and *Fitness Canada* jointly launched the *Women's Program*, "to develop and promote ways of involving more women in sport and fitness activities" through the elimination of "the traditional barriers that inhibited the full and equal participation by women" (Hall, 2002, p. 168). The federal initiative, *Women's Program*, was able to circumvent provincial jurisdiction by creating programs for girls at the community level. This paradigm shift in the approach to female sports meant an increase in competitive sporting opportunities and organizations for girls, throughout the 1980s, 1990s and into this century. Thus, although increased access to competitive sport opportunities coincided with other societal and institutional changes, women experienced

improved access to sport, which has provided them with more mastery experiences in competition. These two pieces of legislation alone did not create competitive opportunities for girls, as the 1970s and 1980s also heralded many social, political and economic reforms that improved the status of women in Canada. Nonetheless, government policy does affect social organization and attitudes (Macintosh et al. 1987).

Is there a historical sport and politics relationship?

During the early stages of this work, a literature review of several biographies revealed two of the earliest Canadian female representatives had competitive sport experience during their adolescence. Nellie McClung (elected to the Alberta Legislature in 1921) was active in recreational sports. As a sixteen-year-old teacher (1889), McClung received the criticism of some parents when they discovered that she regularly played football and baseball with her students (Strong-Boag, Rosa and Roas, 2003). Another biography identified that Agnes Macphail, the first women elected to the House of Commons, was captain of the girls' high school basketball team [circa. 1905] in Owen Sound, Ontario (Brown, 1999). Beyond these two references, no other biographies reviewed mentioned formal or informal participation in sport. However, three possible points of competitive socialization stem from various biographies that discuss early female representatives.

First, Brodie's (1985) research identified that women in western Canada were more likely to campaign for office than women living in other regions of the country, offering several reasons why this may have occurred (Trimble, 1995, p. 99). It is also possible that the community approach to competitive sport organization in western

Canada influenced the attitudes of adolescent females because of the participation of male coaches and organizers. Exposure to masculine values of competitiveness may have afforded these adolescent girls with a different approach towards competitive behaviour. The second point is that play through informal sports would have provided one opportunity to develop competitive behaviours for many young women in rural and small communities. However, it is uncertain whether unstructured sport [read: "play"] in the early 20th century could have socialized any intensity of competitiveness. The dedication required to commit oneself to an organized, competitive sport appears to have a greater potential for socializing competitiveness, developing mastery experiences in competition, and eliminating the stigma of participating in male-dominated activities (discussed below). This consideration does offer a third possibility.

The argument that competitive sport experience might have socialized these women in competitive electoral behaviour may not apply to the women campaigning in the 1920s or 1930s. Women of this generation faced many barriers to competitive sport or work experiences with little to no access to organized competitive sports. However, the biographies of the earliest female electoral representatives discuss their respective participation in the suffrage movement and the intensely adversarial tenure of an active and embedded anti-suffrage movement (Brown, 1999; MacEwan, 1975; Martin, 2001; Prentice et al., 1988). The Suffragettes faced competition, presented as conflict and resistance, from ruling-class males in both civil society and formal politics. It is possible that the Suffragette struggle created positive mastery experiences in competition. In turn, the positive experience of winning the franchise may have socialized competitiveness

within this generation of women, especially winning within the rules of a male-dominated environment. Given that this generation grew up in a society that socialized girls away from sports and formal politics (Hall, 2002; Prentice et al., 1988), it is possible that most of the early female representatives gleaned their competitiveness through the fight for franchise (MacEwan, 1975). However, the paucity of women in elected office between the 1920s and 1950s underscores the social, economic and political barriers women faced in their political participation, regardless of their access to formal, organized, competitive sports (Hall, 2002; Prentice et al., 1988).

Caveats and Moving Forward

Before discussing the following chapters, it is important to note three caveats to this research. First, this is a study of the responses and experiences of female political elites. However, I would caution the reader to remember that women do not act, respond or think as a unified group. In fact, there can be greater diversity in the opinions and beliefs among women than between men and women (Gidengil, 2006; Kimmel, 2004). As such, this research is more about the psychological disposition towards competition than the collective beliefs of a subject group with a shared biology. Second, the argument presented herein is that competitive sport socialization in adolescence may help women deal with the hyper-competitive masculinity in electoral politics. This work is not arguing, though, that competitive socialization leads to political candidacy. The desire to pursue elected office tends to emanate from other socializing sources, such as family, peers or education, which help nurture an aptitude and interest in politics (Kelly and Boutilier, 1978). As such, this work emphasizes that a woman's participation in electoral

politics does not syllogistically follow from her competitive sport socialization.

The final caveat for consideration is that, although this research examines competition within the confines of sport, this ought not preclude other forms of competitive socialization. As will be discussed in the following chapters, the focus here is upon competitive sport experiences, given the linguistic, media, cultural, social and institutional overlaps between sports and electoral politics. However, since research must begin somewhere and should occur in manageable chunks, the present work examines competitive experiences in adolescent sport only.

The following chapters examine the underlying theory of the hypothesis, pose the necessary arguments, present the data and discuss the results in context of the research. Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical underpinnings of the thesis, discussing the theories of socialization, gendered mediation, game-framing and social learning, respectively, to provide the reader with the background that supports the thesis. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology used in the research and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the survey used to collect data. The penultimate chapter examines the data collected from 219 female candidates who participated in the 15 November 2008 British Columbia General Local Elections. This chapter also includes data that creates a general profile of the women who campaigned for local office. Finally, the last chapter discusses the results of the research and applies considerations to the proposed thesis. The data demonstrates a strong correlation, which ought to support further study into competitive behaviours of political elites. However, we begin with the foundational theory of this work and the relationship between the development of self-efficacy in sport and in electoral politics.

Chapter 2: Supporting Theories

The political adage, "everything relates to everything else" is quite applicable to this work. Rarely do thoughts, behaviours or actions occur in isolation of an individual or society. For this thesis, there is not one factor or one mechanism that motivates an individual to candidacy. Instead, external influences interlace with internal efficacious beliefs, which continuously evolve and re-evolve cognitive experiences. These blended influences also affect psychological assessments, which play an extensive role in how an individual participates in civic and electoral politics or, indeed, if the individual participates at all.

This chapter discusses the four main theories that support the notion of a competitive sport - electoral politics relationship in female candidates. It begins by examining primary and secondary socialization, and the role that gender socialization plays in establishing the non-codified rules of a society. Research in this area points to the impact that socializing competitiveness and political participation has upon our future considerations and behaviours. The discussion of socialization leads into an analysis of the gendered mediation thesis and game-framing theory, respectively. Media can play an important role in influencing political participation, usually accomplished through the symbolic representations of language and imagery. The final part of this section will evaluate social learning theory, specifically identifying the overlapping discourse between political science and sport psychology. It is in this portion of the work where the link between competition and political participation appears to lie. From there, the last section of this chapter briefly discusses the impact of causal spread and its potential influence upon the present research.

Socialization

Lutfy and Mortimer (2003) define *socialization* as "the process by which individuals acquire social competence by learning the norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, language characteristics, and roles appropriate to their social groups" (183). These processes of socialization tend to occur in two forms: *primary socialization* and *secondary socialization* (Mortimer and Simmons, 1978). Primary socialization occurs during childhood and early adolescence, where agents of socialization - predominantly, family - provide children and youth with "the basic values and motivations that will be generically appropriate to later tasks" in life (Lutfey and Mortimer, 2003). In this relationship, children act as students learning acceptable and appropriate social behaviours, with these behaviours being particularized to the social identities - class, ethnicity, race, religion, sex, gender - that encompass their immediate social environment (Lutfey and Mortimer, 2003: 186). For this research, primary socialization applies to conditions of gender (discussed below), as gender socialization is one of the earliest and most influential forces in our social environment (Anderson and Taylor, 2006). While primary socialization develops an individual's "basic or core personality," secondary socialization involves more specific socialized development.

Mortimer and Simmons (1978) argue that the more specific development of secondary socialization occurs "in response to the acquisition of new group memberships and roles and differently structured social situations" outside the primary influences (422). In this process, new experiences of adolescence can affect "the development of overarching values and the self-image" and can either build upon or reshape

characteristics affected by primary socializing agents (Mortimer and Simmons, 1978: 423). Secondary socialization tends to contribute to the "sense of self" that develops and evolves during adolescence, which is "an essential component of self efficacy" (Kindle, 2006: 101). As discussed below, competitive experiences in adolescent sports provide the secondary socialization that may provide young women with the potentiality of future political competitiveness through the development of their self-efficacious beliefs (Ozer and Bandura, 1990). However, in the context of this work and unless otherwise specified, the term *socialization* will refer to Lufty and Mortimer's (2003) interpretation and applies to the broader meaning of the definition.

Gender Socialization

Anderson and Taylor (2006) describe the process of *gender socialization* in the following manner:

> Through gender socialization, men and women learn the expectations associated with their sex. The rules of gender extend to all aspects of society and daily life. Gender socialization affects the self-concepts of women and men, their social and political attitudes, their perceptions about other people, and their feelings about relationships with others. [… Gender] socialization is a powerful force directing the behaviour of men and women in gender-typical ways. 305

Generally, the most common and pervasive agents of gender socialization are the parents and the family unit, the education system, religious institutions and media; gender values are "reinforced whenever gender-linked behaviours receive approval or disapproval from these multiple influences" (Anderson and Taylor, 2006: 305). These influences can be powerful. Caldera and Sciaraffa (1998) found that by eighteen-months of age, gender socialization had become well established within most toddlers, as expressed by their choices of gender-appropriate toys. It is this active reinforcement of behaviours deemed

"gender-appropriate" that places boys and girls on divergent paths, ensuring that they face different assessments of similar situations. Attitudes towards competition and competitive behaviours are such diverging paths.

Gender socialization is immediate in our lives, often starting with the perfunctory assignment of blue or pink attire at birth by hospital staff and family. Kimmel (2004) identifies that, from Day 1, we tend to socialize boys and girls with different preferences and often with opposing interests, especially towards aggression and competition:

> Boy's independence, aggression and suppression of emotion are rewarded, and failure to comply brings increasing disapproval. Girls are encouraged to express emotions and control aggression, and they are given more opportunities to be dependent; crying is tolerated longer than among boys. [...] Boys play is more rough-and-tumble and competitive, designed to permit some boys to win and others to lose. Boys attempt to influence the direction of the play with direct demands; girls use more subtle and indirect methods to try to influence each other. Boys play to achieve dominance; girls play to make sure everyone has a good time. (131)

Although Kimmel's description of male and female behaviour does not necessarily apply to all children in all situations, gender-role socialization does tend to guide girls and boys towards different activities, choices and goals. One aspect of this process is that gender-role socialization teaches males to express their citizenship through participation in *electoral politics* – participation that emphasizes policy or legislative change through elected office - while instructing females to achieve their goals through *civic politics* – participation on boards and volunteer service in civil society (Carroll, 1989). The outcome is self-evident, as formal politics tends to be a male-centric, paternalistic and a male dominated activity (Gidengil et al. 2006). Conversely, women generally demonstrate political involvement through civic responsibilities of volunteerism and

work in social support agencies (Baxter and Lansing, 1993). Gender socialization during childhood and adolescence is an underlying process that establishes the basic framework in which future political activity will occur (Feltz et al., 2008: 116).

The effects of gender-role socialization are evident when we consider physical activity levels and sports participation of girls. In 1996, a study produced by the *Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute* (CFLRI) demonstrated that girls aged one to four year old are 20% less physically active than boys of the same age. This difference equalizes between the ages of 5 and 12, as boys and girls have approximately the same levels of fitness and activity. However, the former trend returned in adolescence, evident by a 40% drop in the activity and participation rate of teen girls. The similarity between the first and third cohort – and the egalitarianism of the middle group – was found in the intensity and choices of the activities pursued. For teen girls, play and sport were less physical and the preference was for noncompetitive individual sports versus competitive team sports (CFLRI, 1996). However, the report clearly identified gender socialization as an influence upon sport choice: "The stereotyping of certain activities as more appropriately "male" or "female" plays a significant part in the disparities in both the participation rates and activity choices of boys and girls" (11). CFLRI issued another report three years later, this time with a stronger evaluation of sport socialization:

> Gender has been proposed as a potential barrier to participation in physical activity. Boys are generally encouraged and supported, to a greater degree, than girls to participate in physical activity by both society and media. There are more male sports role models, more programs that could be considered "boys" sports available, and a greater acceptance by parents that boys should be active. Boys may also have more freedom to "go outside and play" than do girls. Cragg, Cameron, Craig and Russell, 1999: 31

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These two reports demonstrate the cyclical nature of gender socialization and that it can occur and affect the broader social conditions of our lives.[i] If it remains unchallenged, gender-role socialization can create boundaries and limit our free participation in most aspects of life, ultimately manifesting as policy decisions emanating from presumed ideas of appropriate gender roles. Whether one adheres to the prescribed rules and boundaries found in primary socialization of gender may be dependent upon secondary socialization (Mussell, 1984). If we examine competitive sport socialization, the strength of a sport – politics relationship becomes clearer and demonstrates how ignoring prescribed boundaries and exercising choice can change future political activities.

Competitive Sport Socialization

Clearly, political knowledge does not come from participation in sports. An aptitude and interest in politics requires its own processes of socialization, usually through family, peer or educational influences (Kelly and Boutilier, 1978: Dyck, 2005). The argument presented here is that a positive relationship exists between competitive sport socialization in adolescence and the attitude towards electoral competition in female candidates. As stated above, gender-role socialization tends to focus males towards electoral politics, while socializing females towards civic politics (Carroll, 1989). Unlike electoral politics, the social orientation of the civic community is one of caring, cooperation, and non-competitiveness, with an emphasis on need, goodwill and the dialogue between elected and unelected political actors. Thus, there remains a social

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[i] The cyclical nature being a process whereby a socialized preference (for example, boys and the colour blue) leads to predetermined choice (a boy preferring a blue hat) that leads to another socialized preference (only wearing hats sold in the boys' section of a store).

perpetuation of the belief that electoral and civic politics are dichotomous, gendered political spheres; the masculinity of formal politics emphasizes competition whereas the femininity of informal politics emphasizes cooperation. This dichotomy may reveal why fewer women than men campaign for office, but it does not explain what socialization processes influence or encourage some women to compete for office.

Larry Diamond (1994) believes that the function of civil society is to develop and support democracy, by building efficacy and democratic values, creating leaders and checking the power of the state (c.f. Allison, 1997). Although Diamond's context is Third World development, Allison expands Diamond's thesis to encompass sports:

> If we take Diamond's list of the (democratic) functions of civil society, then sports clubs can perform most of them. In a club, people can develop democratic skills, practices and values by making collective decisions and running committees. Sport organizations certainly recruit and train leaders and disseminate information, though usually all this happens in a sporting context. (1997: 714)

Allison's observation demonstrates that sports can be the training ground for political participation, especially in the development of mastery experiences in social capital networking and competition. As noted above, social capital networks are reciprocal, trusting and collective in their goal orientation. By contrast, formal politics tend to revolve around the competition for power, which often requires individualistic, coercive and competitive behaviour. Therefore, to make the transition from civic participation to formal politics, one must acquire mastery experiences in competition, best learned through sports. To probe the idea further requires a definition of sport and competition.

Brown (1983) argues that sports participation includes, "the purely recreational to the highly competitive […] both amateur and professional […] from direct participation

to involvement in a secondary role" (124). However, the present examination would encompass Brown's qualifiers of *highly competitive*, *professional* and *direct participation*. In this case, *sports* are defined as only those organized athletic activities that increase or emphasize competitive mastery experiences. A *competition* is any organized sport event that offers the (female) competitor the chance to achieve or surpass her outcome expectancy, while strengthening her efficacy expectations. It should be noted, though, that competitive outcomes may take two separate forms: public and private. The results of some competitions, such as those involving academia or arts, tend to have *private outcomes*; that is, participants compete mainly against their own previous achievements and results are not necessarily made public. In these situations, minor publicity may still identify winners and losers but the knowledge is not necessarily widely known or considered as significant. Conversely, *public outcomes* occur in situations where the winners and losers are widely known, as can occur in the wake of the moments that led to success or failure in significant athletic competitions or elections. A broader base of the population is aware - perhaps keenly so - of who won, who lost and why the result was such; for the competitor, winning and losing are very public events. The present work does not differentiate between public and private outcomes of competition, but the reader ought to note that competitive sports and electoral politics share the very public exposure of success and failure. Risking failure in a public competition takes strong self-confidence within the participant.

Defining *sport* and *competition* in this manner identifies two manners of competitive sport. First, it can be a contest between the individual (alone or as part of a

team) and others, competing for a singular goal, such as wining a championship or tournament. The second form of competitive sport occurs when the individual self-competes with the intent of meeting or surpassing desired outcomes related to her own skills, such as a faster performance time, achieving greater distance, increasing personal strength or besting a personal performance. Thus, positive competitive experiences that strengthen self-efficacy will increase and intensify the perception of confidence and competence in one's abilities. For adolescent girls, sport can provide the mastery experiences in competition.

Webb (1969) defines competitive sports as the "professionalization of attitudes towards play" (Kane, 1982: 290). Webb argues that people become competitive during adolescence as their ideas about play transform from the earlier-established ideas of 'fun' to a more involved, emotional state of 'win.' When adolescents participate in organized sports, they enter "a valuable learning environment whereby the social skills cultivated […] may be relevant in later life" (Kane, 1982: 290). Adolescence is the period when, "the dominant values of the work ethic (success, achievement, competition) become superimposed on the domain of play and games" (290). When the values of success, achievement and competition merge with sports, a change occurs in the preferred outcome of sport participation by, "increasing [the] emphasis placed on skill and victory" which correspondingly diminishes the importance on fairness (Kane, 1982: 290). Therefore, adolescent girls who are either not competitive in sport or participate in noncompetitive sport, tend to self-socialize towards fair play (Kane, 1982), whereas adolescent boys "naturally" develop skills relevant to competition and competitiveness

(Webb, 1969). The result is the development of competitive males and noncompetitive females. Thus, the professionalization of play becomes "relevant later in life" as the competitive men may have greater comfort with competition in other aspects of society. The opposite may be true for females not socialized in adolescent sport, as they may emphasize a collective "fairness" of the civic community (Heywood and Dworkin, 2003).

Olcott (1979) supports the contention that girls lack the professionalization of attitudes towards play, given that society tends to socialize females away from sports, especially competitive ones. Given that boys have greater access and opportunities to compete in sports, Olcott (1979) believes that coaches must nurture the mental, physical and social aspects of female athletes to socialize them as competitors. Even if a professionalization gap between females and males still remains, Blair (1985) demonstrated that the gap had narrowed somewhat by the early 1980s, which may reflect the "growth in organized school-based sports for women" (Putnam, 2000: 110). It is worth noting that current research demonstrates a reversal in this trend as adolescent girls record greater competitiveness and sport participation than boys their age (Cameron, Wolfe and Craig, 2007). This may be the result of policies initiated in the 1970s and 1980s (discussed below), and changing social attitudes towards stereotypical gender and sex-roles. Adolescent girls today have better access to community programming and greater opportunities in amateur sports and competitive sport socialization (Feltz et al., 2008). However, the sex-role and gender-role socialization remain an active and effective part of the discourse in politics.

The Game Frame and Gendered Mediation

Politics, like most social constructs, is an integrated aspect in the fabric of our society and in our social behaviour. We use culturally familiar language to describe and articulate our political surroundings and situations. In our attempt to create a simple, culturally relevant understanding of politics, we often translate complicated and technical jargon into colloquial or minimal language that describes political activity. Given that men have traditionally controlled both the content and public distribution of news events, we still tend to represent the competitive world of politics with metaphors and analogies rooted in competitive sport. However, most sport analogies and metaphors stem from the language of war and discord as each description tends to accompany an inherent sense of violence, aggression and conflict (Gidengil and Everitt, 2003). As a result, our language transmits politics as a sport. Candidates "run" for office, while a political campaign is a "horse race" between parties (Littlewood, 1999). Following a debate, political pundits refer to oral exchanges as "jabs" and are quick to identify a "knockout punch" if one candidate orally disarms another (Littlewood, 1999). When "the gloves are off," journalists are advising citizens that a campaign has become negative (Graham, 2008).

Framing politics in this manner accomplishes several things. First, it undermines the importance of actual political participation and discourse, in some sense trivializing the significance of government, governance and democracy. Second, these analogies subtly emphasize that political "players" must be experienced in - or at least comfortable with - the elements of warfare and gamesmanship. Finally, the language of sport, war, aggression and violence can be foreign to citizens not socialized in these activities or

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images. As Corsaro and Fingerson (2003) identify, "language, interactions and discourse" are fundamental conditions of gender socialization, and children not socialized with the gendered representation of sport (i.e. girls) may grow up not understanding the full context of public political discourse (143). To game frame with the patois of sports may disconnect politics from citizens who lack either the experience or the comfort with the imagery. They may distance themselves from the debates – if not all politics - since the competition-as-conflict representations do not encourage their participation. As stated above, sex-role and gender-role socialization develops different behaviours and responses in girls and boys; competitive males play games of aggression and violence, while cooperative females role-play situations of domesticity, learning or care giving. Thus, if the game frame of politics is the language of males, then the disconnected citizens ought to be women who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the imagery. This is an underlying premise of the gendered mediation thesis.

The *gendered mediation thesis* examines gender biases embedded within political reportage and discourse (Gidengil and Everitt, 2003). As Gidengil and Everitt posit:

> The way in which politics is reported is significantly determined by a male-oriented agenda that privileges the practice of politics as an essentially male pursuit. The image and language of mediated politics, therefore, supports the status quo (male as norm) and regards women politicians as novelties. (2003:91)

The aggressive, violent and macho language of politics reinforces the male-as-politician image because the analogies and metaphors of sports remain disconnected images for those who do not understand or subscribe to the inferences and representations (Ross and Sreberny, 2000). For women who do participate or want to participate in electoral politics, the repercussions of a gendered discourse could disconnect them from

participation. Since the game frame is a masculine portrait, it reveals the "unnatural position of women in politics" and challenges "appropriate gender role behaviour" (Gidengil and Everitt, 2003: 574). Trimble and Sampert argue that, "game framing shapes the selection and content of news stories, focusing on the horse-race elements of the campaign […] offering conflict between elites, winners and losers, personalities, drama and immediacy" all of which mimics the dominant elements of sport culture and reportage (2004: 52-3). Thus, just as "sport competition is considered a masculine role in our society" the media highlights the masculinity and bravado of electoral politics by using a 'game frame' (Wark and Wittig, 1979: 250). Game framing and gender-role socialization may attract more men to electoral politics than women.

By contrast, and as stated above, women tend to emphasize their political participation in the venues of the civic community (Baxter and Lansing, 1993; Putnam, 2000). Unlike electoral politics, the social orientation of the civil community is one of caring, cooperation, and non-competitiveness, where media reportage emphasizes need or goodwill and encourages a dialogue between all political actors. Here, the game frame tends to be absent, while the beneficiaries of community-based goals are most often groups with minority representation: women, children, ethnics and the marginalized. Unfortunately, the caregiving nature of the civic community perpetuates the caregiving socialization of gender roles: policy development is masculine, while caregiving is feminine (Kimmel, 2004: 104). Thus, we propagate the belief that electoral and civic politics are dichotomous, gendered political spheres where the competition of electoral politics emphasizes masculinity and the cooperation of civic politics emphasizes

femininity. Although this dichotomy may reveal why fewer women than men campaign for office, it does not explain why some women choose to campaign for office.

Kane demonstrates that women whose sex-role orientation was more masculine than feminine "were more likely to endorse a 'male' or professional attitude toward play" indicating that, "attitudes held towards play may be more a function of a level of athletic involvement and/or sex-role orientation than gender" (1982: 293). For Kane, athleticism appears to encourage competitiveness. Conversely, if most women emphasize skill over winning (Kane, 1982) then electoral competition is a disincentive to participation (Lenny, 1977; Bandura 1982; Bennett & Bennett 1989). The disincentive is not the result of a low self-confidence or presumed inability to hold office, but in the comfort and familiarity of competition. This point is discussed further in Chapter 5. For now, political efficacy, self-efficacy and social learning are the focus.

Political Efficacy is Self-Efficacy

Since the 1950s, political scientists have also evolved definitions of internal political efficacy. The term *political efficacy* first appeared in the seminal work, *The Voter Decides*, where the authors defined it as, "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process" (Campbell et al., 1954: 187). In *The American Voter*, Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960) slightly modify the definition to, "the effectiveness the individual feels in his relation to politics" (103). From this period forward, all definitions of political efficacy revolve around the essential pillars of politically efficacious behaviour: effectiveness, influence and competence (Yoshimitsu

and Kleiman, 1974). Easton and Dennis (1967), and Mattei and Niemi (2005) offer

similar yet distinct summaries of political efficacy:

> [Political efficacy is] a disposition towards politics, a feeling of effectiveness and
> capacity in the political sphere. […] The sense of political efficacy may be
> defined as the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an
> impact upon the political process. […] It is the feeling that political or social
> change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about
> this change. (Easton & Dennis, 1967: 26, 28)

> Broadly defined, political efficacy denotes an individual's belief that he or she is
> capable of understanding political matters, competent to participate in the political
> process, and confident that one's actions can influence political leaders and policy
> outcomes. Political efficacy [… is] one of the key psychological and motivational
> resources enhancing the likelihood of voting and of a broader set of participatory
> behaviours. (Mattei & Niemi, 2005: 525)

Both definitions capture the essence of political efficacy: the effectiveness and influence

of individual actors in shaping a participatory democracy.

By the 1970s, a one-dimensional definition of political efficacy was too broad to

accurately address all the conditions necessary for political participation (Mattei &

Niemi, 2005). For example, the 1968 Meiser survey questioned the "confidence people

have in their ability to influence politics" (c.f. Canada, 1970: 354). However, a

respondent could interpret *confidence* as self-confidence in political knowledge,

confidence in the responsiveness of government, or as confidence in the electoral system.

As such, political scientists generally agree that political efficacy has two distinct

components (Mattei & Niemi, 2005). *Internal political efficacy* refers to one's self-

controlled influences, traits and personality, whereas *external political efficacy* refers to

an individual's perception of the systemic, structural and institutional operations of

formal politics. Variations exist in the specific definition of internal efficacy, though

consistencies are evident. Bennett and Bennett (1989) define internal efficacy as the "belief that one can understand what happens in government and politics" (112). Miller and Traugott (1989) identify internal efficacy as "the individual's self-perception that he or she is capable of understanding politics and competent enough to participate in political acts such as voting" (c.f. Asbjørnsen and Vogt, 1992: 62-3). Craig, Niemi and Silver classify it as "referring to beliefs about one's own competence to understand and participate effectively in politics" (1990: 290). Mattei and Niemi characterize internal political efficacy as "perceptions about one's effectiveness in dealing with the complexity of, and in taking active part in, politics" (2005: 527). Again, most definitions include the ideas of self-confidence, competence and understanding as they pertain to discourse and participation in electoral politics. Nevertheless, it is not possible to examine political efficacy without understanding the developmental process of self-efficacious beliefs.

Sociologist Albert Bandura defined self-efficacy as containing two distinct components: outcome expectancy and efficacy expectation. *Outcome expectancy* is an individual's estimation that a specified behaviour will achieve a desired outcome. *Efficacy expectation* is the belief that one is capable of effectively performing the behaviour necessary to generate the outcome (Bandura, 1977b: 79). Bandura (1977a; 1977b; 1982; 1997) differentiates outcome expectancy and efficacy expectation since an individual can believe that a certain line of behaviours will create reliable results, even if the same individual has doubts about her / his ability to execute these behaviours (1977b: 79). Motivation lies within efficacy expectations, as a strong or high efficacy indicates that the person will expend greater effort and energy and persist longer at a task,

especially when experiencing barriers or opposition against desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977b: 80). Observing this led Bandura to expand his idea of self-efficacy.

In *Self-Efficacy Mechanism in Human Agency*, Bandura describes *self-efficacy* as being concerned with "self-perceptions of one's competency to perform a line of action necessary to deal with forthcoming circumstances" (1982: 124). He also highlights the diversity and depth at which self-efficacy regulates our emotions, attitudes and psyche:

> Perceived self-efficacy helps to account for such diverse phenomena as changes in coping behaviour produced by different modes of influence, level of psychological stress reactions, self-regulation of refractory behaviour, resignation and despondency to failure experiences, self-debilitating effects of proxy control and illusory inefficaciousness, achievement strivings, growth of intrinsic interest, and career pursuits. (124)

There are two significant issues to note. First, Bandura argues that, "some self-doubt is necessary to provide the incentive to invest the time and effort to acquire the knowledge and skill needed to become proficient" (Feltz, et al., 2008: 24). He does caution that too much emphasis on the self-doubt "can turn into a stressor and debilitator [*sic*] rather than a motivator to practice" (Feltz et al., 2008: 24). Second, McAuley and Blissmer (2002: 196) note that, "efficacy expectations are important outcome variables in their own right" since mastery experiences are, themselves, "influential sources of efficacy information". Given the self-reflective quality of internal political efficacy, previous experience guides present considerations (McAuley & Blissmer, 2002). As such, efficacy feeds efficacy, further heightening or lowering levels of confidence and competence.

Bandura (1997) eventually focuses his efficacy studies on political efficacy, identifying it as a person's belief in their ability to shape the political system. He divides political efficacy into two smaller components, one of which he calls the "personal side"

– equivalent to internal political efficacy - where one achieves results by the "enlistment of effort and prolific use of capabilities and resources" (Bandura, 1997: 483). Although he does not specify the type of "capabilities and resources" used, Bandura's previous works (1977a; 1977b; 1982) identify that *resources* and *ability* relate to cognitive skills. In this situation, mastery experience in competitive sport would provide a woman with "capabilities and resources" to effectively neutralize the inherent masculinity of game framed competition in the supposed masculine domain of political office.

In the same work, Bandura argues that individuals will choose to participate in either electoral or civic politics, depending upon a combination of their internal and external efficacious beliefs (1997). Individuals with high internal political efficacy, but a low trust of government, are usually motivated towards social action, not electoral politics (Bandura, 1997: 490). Citizens who do not trust the government (or politicians) will experience a greater sense of accomplishment by working within civic political networks. However, social action could evolve several key efficacious traits: first, a better understanding of the interaction between electoral and civic politics; second, a greater appreciation for the work and abilities of politicians, bureaucrats and the system; third, a greater comprehension of the role of political institutions, and; finally, an increase in trust for government. If one gains a better understanding of and confidence in political institutions, the first three traits ought to build higher internal political efficacy. The final trait ought to potentially heighten one's internal political efficacy and trust in government. Bandura (1997) notes that individuals with high internal and external political efficacy are motivated towards conventional or electoral political participation

(490). Although it is possible for social action to develop both internal efficacy and a trust of government, social action does not provide women with the necessary skills for formal political participation.

It is improper to claim that high internal political efficacy is *the* trigger to political participation. Realistically, one cannot assume that a single factor or a single source determines political participation in electoral politics. Most political behaviouralists acknowledge "the individual's whole self-structure" influences the decision to participate (Stone, 1974: 157). Kelly and Boutilier (1978) argue that internal political efficacy has to make political activity notable before one considers becoming a candidate. Campbell et al. (1960) consider ego strength as a pillar of political efficacy, while Putnam (2000) believes that access to strong social capital is important for the formation of internal efficacy. Lawless and Fox (2005) state that, "internal efficacy exists prior to any consideration of the potential of becoming elected. From this perspective, a woman will consider her own efficacy before she considers the 'space' in which she will run" (29). Socioeconomic status is also a factor, as are many social, organizational and institutional dynamics that contribute to one's consideration to participate as a candidate. A simple peripheral consideration, such as the awareness of the opportunity to participate as a candidate, also influences one's participation.

Efficacy considerations also have a psychological influence. Bandura et al. (2001: 190) state that, "efficacy beliefs influence whether people think pessimistically or optimistically and in ways that are self-enhancing or self-hindering". Likewise, not all efficacious beliefs necessarily cross from one interest to another (Bandura et al., 2001).

For example, an optimistic woman with high internal political efficacy could simply lack the self-confidence in role-related tasks, such as public speaking, debating or glad-handing. Equally, one could have highly efficacious interpersonal traits, yet have no interest in politics (Stone, 1974). What is consistent in the psychology of political candidates is the presence of high internal political efficacy. Campbell et al. (1954) demonstrate that political efficacy is a necessary condition for political participation. Renshon (1974: 31) advances this idea and argues that internal political efficacy is not "considered a motivation to participate" but, more accurately, it is the necessary condition for participation. In effect, one may participate in politics due to high efficacy, not from a desire to be efficacious (Kelly & Boutilier, 1978). Therefore, high internal political efficacy is a predictor of political participation. Having high efficacy alone may not be enough for most women, as their efficacious beliefs must also include a confidence with competition in the male-dominant venue of electoral politics. This confidence may come from mastery experiences acquired during adolescent participation in competitive sports.

Connecting Competitive Sport with Electoral Politics

In *Self-Efficacy Mechanism in Human Agency*, Bandura (1982) discusses the gender differences in efficacy-related decisions surrounding career choices. He identifies that, "males perceive themselves to be equally efficacious for traditionally male and female vocations" while females judge their efficacy as high for traditionally female occupations, "but inefficacious in mastering the educational requirements and job functions" for male-dominated careers (Bandura, 1982: 134). This is significant given that, "actual verbal and quantitative ability on standardized tests" demonstrates little to no

difference between males and females (1982: 134). In other words, women and men

differed significantly on the perception and use of their sub-skills in a given occupation.

However, if a woman perceives an occupation to be gender neutral, her self-efficacy will

be higher.

Two decades later, Bandura et al. (2001) maintains that gender differences

remained in efficacy-related decisions of occupational interests; girls still tend to perceive

themselves as inefficacious in traditionally masculine occupations. The authors identify

the conditions that these choices inevitably affect:

> Different courses of occupational development immerse one in particular types of
> social networks and normative influences that play important contributory roles in
> setting the courses that lives take. For example, choice of occupational pursuits is
> likely to determine the nature of friendship patterns, marital partnerships,
> avocational interests and socioeconomic life conditions. Bandura et al., 2001: 203

Competitive sport socialization could be one avenue towards changing the gender-related

self-perceptions of adolescent girls and could contribute to strengthening their self-

efficacy in traditionally masculine domains.

The relationship between electoral competition and competitive sports lies within

the idea of self-efficacy, as both politics and sport require competence and confidence for

effective performance levels and standards in competition against the self or others. In

their research on efficacy and sport, Feltz et al. (2008) establish eleven different efficacy

typologies, with each typology affecting the athlete in specific ways. Four of the

typologies are relevant to this thesis:

> *Self-regulatory efficacy* is "the ability to exercise influence over one's own
> motivation, thought processes, emotional states, and patterns of behaviour."

Ameliorative and coping efficacy operates "with reference to perceived ability to manage perceived threats […] and beliefs about coping with competitive stress [and] controlling unwanted thoughts."

Preparatory efficacy deals with the beliefs surrounding "a task or a competition during the preparation phase" which "includes the acquisition of skills and the preparation for a competition."

Competitive efficacy is "the belief that one can compete successfully against an opponent. These beliefs are based on normative performance markers, and […] should not be confused with outcome expectation beliefs." Feltz et al., 2008: 23 - 25

Isolating these four typologies helps identify two significant aspects of the efficacy and competitive sport relationship.

The first reason for isolating the typologies is to establish that a relationship between internal political efficacy and sport efficacy may exist, especially when considering competition and conflict in context of an election campaign. *Self-regulatory* efficacy could provide the motivation, processes and behaviours necessary for the consideration to campaign for office (Bandura, 1977b, 1982; Mattei & Niemi, 2005). Obviously, every candidate is motivated to serve in office, and self-regulatory efficacy may support that motivation through positive mental states and behaviours. *Ameliorative and coping efficacy* could contribute to one's ability to successfully handle difficult situations, such as a potential threat to one's power or in the management of competitive stress. As citizens, media and contenders continually challenge the platform, ideas and values of candidates, coping efficacy may provide the internal mechanisms for handling the stress of challenges to power and power struggles. *Preparatory efficacy* could include understanding current events (Asbjørnsen & Vogt, 1992), comprehending the necessity of political organization (Bennett & Bennett, 1989), or effectively participating in electoral

politics (Craig et al., 1990). A candidate ought to comprehend the background and context of issues relevant to that campaign, so positive preparatory efficacy may ensure that the candidate acquires both the necessary cognitive and organizational skills that are vital for campaign success. Finally, competitive efficacy may build the competence and confidence required for electoral competition preparations. Considered thusly, these four typologies may contribute to the preparation of female candidates for electoral engagement, as competition (for office, policies or values) and conflict (in values, policies or ideas) are two properties inherent in our participatory democracy.

Identifying the four typologies may also demonstrate the importance of self-comparison in both political and athletic competition. Comparing ourselves to others "is a pervasive social phenomenon" and is one tool humans use to self-assess our own competencies, relative to others we view in either a positive or negative manner (Suls, Martin and Wheeler, 2002: 159). One method of improving performance outcomes is found in *Social Comparison Theory* which uses upward or downward comparisons against others (Suls, Martin and Wheeler, 2002: 162). Downward comparison has the effect of boosting self-esteem and encouraging self-enhancement, since the subject compares herself to an individual she perceives as less competent, capable or fortunate (Suls, Martin and Wheeler, 2002; Alcock, 2005: 75). Upward comparison involves the subject comparing herself to an individual she perceives as more competent, capable or fortunate (Alcock, 2005: 75). Even if upward comparison can deflate one's self-esteem, it can also enhance one's abilities by being the benchmark for self-improvement (Alcock, 2005: 75).

In a competitive sport situation, a contestant may compare her skills or performance to those of her competitor (Feltz et al., 2008). As Feltz (2008) identifies, an athlete will compare her performance to the similar competencies of her competition. In the realm of competitive sports, a downward comparison against a weaker competitor reaffirms an obviously successful competency, whereas an upward comparison will identify a competency that requires improvement for competitive success. Similarly, comparisons against other candidates during an election campaign may cause a candidate to evaluate her own beliefs, ideas, or expressions. If a particular strategy or competency does not work with the same success that another candidate achieved, then an upward or downward comparison against other candidates may identify different competencies or strategies to highlight. Thus, self-comparison is one link of the efficacy-sport relationship, especially relative to Bandura's (1994) idea of vicarious experiences.

The most relevant of Bandura's "four main sources of influence" on self-efficacy is vicarious experience (1994: 2). *Vicarious experiences* are the observations and comparisons between the self and others (Feltz et al., 2008), whereby mastery experiences build upon each other (Bandura, 1997), with the resulting experience outcomes directly influencing both political efficacy and sport self-efficacy. In sport, athletes judge the capabilities of their competitors and compare their own levels of fitness, physique or health to the opponent (Feltz et al., 2008). Given that men tend to dominate politics (Trimble, 1995; Gidengil et al., 2006; Gidengil, 2007), a female candidate may view male competitors as more suited to the role of elected representative (Baxter and Lansing, 1993), given that men tend to have greater access to networks and

resources that stem from more work and social opportunities (O'Neill and Gidengil, 2005). This comparative approach or "relative efficacy" (Westholme and Niemi, 1986: 65) may influence the assessment of one's own political competencies. For example, Jane may compare herself to John's professional experiences, his social capital and his political persona, all of which she believes makes John appear to be the better candidate. Through relative efficacy, Jane will regulate her feelings of adequacy relative to John, regardless of the self-assessment of her internal political efficacy.

Although Craig et al. (1990: 292) challenge the existence of "relative efficacy" as an independent component of internal political efficacy, candidates could consider their own political competency in relation to others. According to Feltz et al. (2008: 9):

> Results indicated that observing a competent or incompetent competitor differentially affected participants' self-efficacy beliefs and performance. Participants who competed against an injured competitor had higher performance efficacy and endured longer than those who competed against a varsity athlete.

Therefore, relative efficacy evaluations by candidates may either increase or decrease their levels of internal efficacy accordingly. However, competitive sport socialization could ensure that such evaluations are positive, since the four typologies of sport efficacy show that adolescent experience in competitive sport can place greater emphasis on one's own strengths and weaknesses, rather than those of the opponents. Thus, a female candidate with a positive assessment of her ability to compete against others may not place much consideration on the actual competitiveness of the electoral campaign.

A Brief Note on Social Capital

In his work, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* Robert Putnam (2000: 19) defines the essence of *social capital*:

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to priorities of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations.

One could argue that competitive sports participation develops social capital experiences that, in turn, provide women with the necessary preparation to effectively compete in formal politics. Certainly, social capital exchanges develop mastery experiences in organization, leadership and interpersonal relationships and competitive sport organizations would be one network that generates social capital knowledge. As stated above, competitive sports opportunities for females have increased since the 1980s (Morrow et al., 1989; Hall, 2002; O'Neill & Gidengil, 2006), which has had the effect of creating new networks of social exchange surrounding sports clubs, teams and athletic organizations. These developing networks provide new occasions and experiences for girls to develop social capital (O'Neill & Gidengil, 2006: 229), which increases their social interaction, thereby building political competence. As positive efficacious experiences occur, internal efficacy strengthens, which leads to greater social connectedness. Consequently, social capital can feed political efficacy, which reinforces and encourages greater social networking.

However, O'Neill and Gidengil (2006) argue that, "in the formal arena of local democracy, social capital seems a less good predictor of political involvement for women than men" adding that women who hold strong social capital will not necessarily exchange it for political gain (229-32). Furthermore, involvement in a social capital

network does not provide women with the necessary experiences in competition.

Researchers tend to claim *reciprocity*, *collectivity* and *trust* as pillars of social capital.[ii]

Those who participate in social capital networks require the ability to act collectively, be reciprocal in their interactions and trust others in the network. Such standards are often absent in the competitive and individualistic network of formal politics. Therefore, female candidates still require the positive experiences of competition to move from the reciprocal, collective and trusting networks of civic community to the competitive, male-dominated, game framed venue of electoral politics.

The theories presented in this chapter describe the foundation of this research. Gender socialization tends to put boys and girls on different trajectories in their pursuit of competition and competitiveness, doing so very early in life. These differing paths can influence future choices that can improve or decrease the aptitudes of competitive behaviour. Although this does not have a direct link to internal political efficacy, game framing and gendered mediation use representations and imagery of war, aggression and violence to describe political activity. We tend to present these images in the language of competitive sport. Therefore, presenting politics as sport may create a culturally symbolic bridge between sport and politics, whereby individuals socialized in competitiveness and with competitive behaviour may tend to feel comfortable in this domain. By contrast, individuals unfamiliar with sports, especially the violence, aggression, conflict and competition, may tend to feel alienated from electoral politics. If we continue to socialize girls away from competitive behaviours and activities, then we may be further

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[ii] see: Putnam (2000); Fukuyama, F. 2001. "Social capital, civil society and development." Third World Quarterly 22(1): 7-20.; Healy, K. et al. 2007. Gender, social capital and location: understanding the interactions. International Journal of Social Welfare 16: 110-118.

disconnecting females from an essential part of our democratic process. However, to appropriately test this hypothesis, we require data to know whether competitive sport experience in adolescence affects the assessments of political competitiveness in female candidates. The next chapter starts the examination of this hypothesis, as it outlines the methodological approach to the research.

Chapter 3 highlights the methodology of this work. It discusses the choice of research frame and argues for the use of data collected from female municipal candidates rather than from women who have campaigned for provincial or federal office. It also outlines the use of a self-administered survey as the preferred method of gathering the data, and identifies the main themes within the questionnaire. It also explains the need for creating distinct age cohorts among the population, given the varying social, political and athletic experiences available during the decades from the 1950s to 1980s. Finally, the chapter addresses some of the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology, with the intent of suggesting different approaches for future research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

To test the theory presented in the previous chapter, the author mailed a self-administered survey to 449 female candidates who participated in the 15 November 2008 General Local Elections in British Columbia. The original mail out occurred on 15 May 2009, and included a one-page cover letter (Appendix 1), the survey (Appendix II) and a pre-stamped and pre-addressed Business Reply envelope.[i] The researcher also placed an advertisement in the *CivicInfo BC* newsletter, advising locally elected female officials that a survey was entering the field and encouraging their participation (Appendix III). The first completed survey returned 28 May 2009. By 14 June 2009, 145 completed surveys had returned. On 15 June 2009 - one month after the original mail out - a reminder postcard was sent to all subjects who had not yet responded to the initial mail out (Appendix IV). The postcard also advised subjects that they could e-mail me and request an electronic version of the survey; twelve subjects requested and returned surveys in this manner. Between 15 June and 16 November 2009, the author received another 74 completed surveys. In total, 219 subjects participated in the research, a response rate of 48.9%.

This chapter discusses the methodological choices of the research. Specifically, it will explain key factors supporting the decision to survey only female candidates, to use a database of local candidates as the research frame, and the decision to use a self-administered survey instead of personal interviews. Furthermore, it will discuss the pertinent information involved with data collection and recording. Finally, this chapter

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[i] The British Columbia General Election was held 12 May 2009. Given that the subjects of this research tend to be politically active individuals, it was assumed that subjects may be involved in campaign activities. Therefore, to avoid the survey from becoming lost amidst other activities, the decision was made to mail out the survey following the Provincial election.

concludes with a brief reflection of some of the methodological challenges that became

evident after analyzing the data. We begin with the decision to survey female candidates.

Why Investigate Only Women?

The primary motivation for this research is to investigate the possibility that

electoral competition is a barrier that adversely affects a woman's consideration for

campaigning for elected office. This research begins with the understanding that men

dominate electoral politics and that they are over represented in elected office. At the end

of 2008, men held 78.8% of 1054 federal and provincial seats (Trimble and Arscott,

2009b), yet comprised approximately one-half of the Canadian population (Statistics

Canada, 2009). This representative imbalance appears to indicate that the structure of

electoral politics is easier for men to access than for women. Therefore, given that men

dominate elected office and that men appear to have few problems accessing the electoral

structure, there is little desire to investigate the avenues male candidates use to reach

elected office.[ii] Instead, this project is more interested in deepening an understanding of

the motivations of female candidates, studying their participation to find clues that may

lead to increasing the number of women in elected office.

Another significant reason for studying only female candidates is to avoid

perpetuating normative and stereotypical thinking. As previously stated, men are

dominant in electoral politics, which socializes and institutionalizes male participation

and behaviour as being the normal activity. The result of this socialization process is the

tendency to compare data with the "normal" male responses, attitudes or behaviours. The

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[ii] Note that legislative bodies tend not to be representative of all male identities either. For example, there exists an under-representation of men with First Nations heritage and males of ethnic backgrounds. Many of the barriers facing female participation in electoral politics also apply to these men.

normalization of politician-as-male must end if we are to succeed in encouraging more women to participate in elected office. Gidengil takes this belief further, arguing that political science must begin "understanding the differences between women" as traditional approaches to gender research emphasizes feminine stereotypes and ignores the reality that women and men hold similar political ideologies all across the spectrum (2007: 815-817). Escaping the juxtaposition of categorical thinking also moves political science away from the "not-so-subtle implication that, 'different' means 'better'" and the innuendo that, in electoral politics, *male* means *normal* (Gidengil, 2007: 16-17). Studying only female candidates permits me to present a profile of local candidates and focus on the diversity of identities within this group of women, avoiding the inevitable normative discussions about how their identity compares to that of male candidates.

Why Research Local Candidates?

The opening chapter of this work identifies that there has been no research into the potential of a sport and political efficacy relationship in Canadian political elites. Since this research requires collecting data that investigates this issue, there are few constraints to choosing a population for study. Given a preference to focus on the Canadian political system, three potential subject groups were available: Members of Parliament, Provincial and Territorial legislators, and municipal councilors. While most academic research focuses on the first two domains, federal and provincial electoral politics have institutional conditions that may limit both the quality and scope of this project. What follows in this section is a brief discussion of the primary institutional conditions that could affect the outcome of the research; specifically, the presence of

gate-keepers and parties, the proximity to the decision-making body, the homogeneity of

the subjects, and the district magnitude of seats. The reason for discussing these

limitations is simple: if a political institution or structure limits the participation of a

certain group, then there are fewer numbers of the group to study. Thus, if the objective

of the research methodology is to find a sizable population from which to draw a

representative sample, then the number of female candidates within a research frame is a

significant factor of the decision.

In Canada, most of the literature that examines the dearth of women in electoral

politics tends to focus on the House of Commons and provincial legislatures. Certainly,

these policy-making environments ought to be more representative of the population,

especially considering their respective Constitutional authority. However, the House and

provincial legislatures have unique political institutions and cultures that may actually

dissuade women from participating as candidates.[iii] Of the federal and provincial political

barriers facing women, the presence of political parties and their gate-keepers play a

dominant role in limiting female electoral participation. Gate-keepers are the local or

regional party members who are responsible for candidate recruitment and selection.

Their very presence can regulate and influence the participatory element of inner-party

competition (Tremblay and Pelletier, 2001). Although participating in a party nomination

is a relatively unobstructed process, gate-keepers usually have in mind a specific profile

of their desired candidate for the riding, and will often seek out individuals from within

the community that fit the profile (Cross, 2004). In electoral districts where the party has

[iii] This discussion is separate the social and economic barriers that can also limit candidacy opportunities
for women. For this discussion, the context is that the potential female candidate has been able to navigate
the social and economic barriers, but now faces obstacles established by political institutions.

the chance of 'winning' the seat, gatekeepers will tend to direct the party membership (or party elite) towards the preferred candidate, usually the person with established political networks, financing and profile within the community. While this may appear to be a relatively fair and logical process, it tends to place women at a disadvantage.

O'Neill and Gidengil (2006) argue that male candidates tend to have stronger networking and financial capabilities, given their relative freedom from reproductive and familial demands, their greater participation in the labour market and the social privileges that accompany their sex. These advantages can also help men accumulate a civic profile, also a significant political resource, as men will tend to exchange their civic capital for political capital, more so than women (O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006). In short, men tend to have more opportunities to accumulate the necessary resources of electoral politics - social and economic capital, and a civic profile – through their work and community experiences. Having the political resources necessary to mount an election campaign makes these individuals appealing candidates for a party. Still, this does not mean that a woman who secures the party's nomination will not be electorally successful; Carty and Erickson (1991) demonstrate a similar rate of electoral success between male and female candidates. However, where gatekeepers tend to be men, there appears to be a relationship between the win-ability of the electoral district and the choice of candidate: the greater the potential for electoral victory, the greater the presence of a male candidate (Gotell and Brodie, 1996; Tremblay and Pelletier, 2001). Therefore, the presence of party gatekeepers can often be an additional barrier to female electoral participation in federal and provincial politics.

Even the presence of political parties themselves can limit participation, especially if the parties do not "provide meaningful opportunities for all citizens to participate" (Cross, 2004: 14). For example, women tend to be the administrators and support staff of local constituency organizations, occupying the necessary "assistant" roles in office management and volunteer opportunities, but women are generally absent at the elite levels of the party (Gotell and Brodie, 1996). By contrast, men have the "responsibility for such things as election strategy, policy development, and patronage – the purview of the 'movers and shakers' in the party" (Gotell and Brodie, 1996: 60). This gender-based division of labour tends to occur in all political parties through the marginalization of women as political participants, an attitude stemming from the view that women are the volunteers and workers of the party (Bashevkin, 1993: 100-105; Gotell and Brodie, 1996). Ironically, marginalization can result from both the presence of a women's auxiliary - such as the Liberal Party's *National Women's Liberal Commission* - or the absence of an organized voice for women – as is the case with the Conservative Party of Canada; the former segregates women while the latter does not believe women require special consideration (Gotell and Brodie, 1996: 65-7; Cross, 2004: 23). In essence, Canadian political parties tend to demonstrate "the higher the fewer rule: the higher up the party echelon one goes and the more electorally competitive the party, the fewer women are to be found" (Gotell and Brodie, 1996: 59).

As innocuous as it may seem, even the physical distance between the legislative body and the candidate's home could influence which women participate as candidates. For most people, serving as an elected Member of the House of Commons or a provincial

parliament means extended absences from home. Being away from either the familial

environment or a physical dwelling generally requires the presence of specific social and

economic conditions, such as a spouse or partner to maintain the home front or the

economic means to achieve care requirements through hired labour. Research appears to

indicate that these conditions could result in a relatively homogenous group of women

participating as candidates and representatives. For example, Trimble & Tremblay (2003)

found that female MPs and MLAs are generally older than the average female population.

By extension, being older may mean that these representatives may have few or no

children at home (Trimble & Tremblay, 2003). Additionally, the need to travel out of the

home community usually requires a freedom of other labour force work (especially

during the campaign for office), indicating a relatively stable income stream, perhaps

stemming from certain professional or occupational choices or backgrounds. In effect, to

be an elected representative requires certain social and economic conditions. If the

economic and social conditions of female candidates are relatively similar, then female

representatives in federal or provincial legislatures may represent a relatively similar

class and profile of citizen. Therefore, using local candidates as the research base

minimizes the relative homogeneity of the population, unlike the profile of female MPs

and MLAs, which tends to be relatively homogenous (Trimble and Tremblay, 2003).

By contrast, the seat of local government tends to be relatively proximate to a

candidate's home community.[iv] Being closer to both town hall and to one's home may be

a better work-family balance and increases the chance to maintain most parental and

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[iv] In the context of this research, proximity to the legislative body may not be possible for candidates and representatives located in geographically large municipal districts, island trusts or amalgamated census metropolitan areas (C.M.E.).

familial obligations (Trimble, 1995). Being proximate also increases the ability for the

representative to keep an existing labour force position, which can maintain the income

stream to the individual and family, something especially necessary for a single parent. It

also provides greater opportunities for younger women to participate, especially if a

spouse, partner or other support individual can help minimize the candidate's private

sphere obligations.

Finally, the district magnitude of local elections offers the potential of having a

larger population of female candidates (Matland and Studlar, 1996). A *district magnitude*

is the "number of members to be elected in each electoral district" (ACE Project, 2009).

In the case of Canadian local elections, there are two dominant forms of electoral

districts: ward and district-wide. A *ward* system is the division of a geo-political area (in

this case, a city, town, village, region, et cetera) into smaller units, with each unit

traditionally represented by one or two councilors on the local governing body. Citizens

vote only for councilors in their ward, with wards generally having a maximum district

magnitude of two (2). When the geo-political area is a single electoral unit and electors

vote for each member of council, this is a *district-wide* electoral division. While it is

usually based upon the size of the geo-political area, district-wide elections tend to have a

minimum district magnitude of four (4). What is important to note is that the larger the

district magnitude, the greater the likelihood that more women will be elected (Matland

and Studlar, 1996; MacIvor, 2003; ACE Project, 2009).[v] As the present research

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[v] This discussion is somewhat theoretical, as over 80% of incumbent local councilors are re-elected.
However, the role that incumbency plays in minimizing the electoral success of new challengers affects
women and men alike (Lightbody, 2006).

demonstrates, a relatively similar number of women campaigned in both the 2008 Local

General Elections in British Columbia and the 2008 Federal General Election. However,

odds of a woman being elected to a local council was 3.1:1, whereas women faced 6.4:1

odds in the federal campaign. Thus, a large number of seats and a high district magnitude

will increase the chance a woman becoming elected to office.

Therefore, the decision to focus the research on local candidates stems from

considerations of some of the main institutional conditions that women face in their

electoral participation. First, examining local subjects ought to provide the research with

a population that has not been selected by a political party. The virtual absence of

municipal parties in almost all of English Canada allows candidates to campaign on a

wider range of issues and platforms not confined to a political ideology or programme

(Lightbody, 2006).[vi] Given that most subjects will campaign as 'independents', this

population ought to be relatively free from organized party selection and direct influence.

Second, a population of local female candidates ought to be a more heterogeneous

population then female politicians in federal and provincial office, since there exists the

potentiality for a greater diversity of participants. Third, higher district magnitudes and a

greater candidate-to-representative ratio means that there are greater opportunities for

women to achieve election. The result ought to be a geographical concentration of

subjects who have both candidacy and representative experiences.

It is important to note that the decision to examine local politics does not imply

that women face no social or economic barriers in municipal participation; these barriers

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[vi] Municipal political parties do operate in parts of the Greater Vancouver Regional District and, on
occasion, in the City of Victoria.

are still present, but the obstacles tend to be less daunting than in federal and provincial

venues. For example, where campaigns for federal or provincial office often require large

amounts of human and financial resources, local campaigns tend to demand a smaller

contingent of workers and fewer economic needs (Trimble and Arscott, 2003). Thus, the

political institutionalism of local politics is such that it usually provides greater electoral

opportunities and success for female candidates (Lightbody, 1995). However, despite the

potential for greater access to city hall, women still campaign for local office far less then

men (Erickson, 1991; Young, 2001).

The Research Instrument

The present work is really an investigation of two separate activities: adolescent

sport participation and adult political participation. Literature reviews quickly

demonstrated that research examining both activities simultaneously is non-existant.

Even though respective surveys regarding sport activities and political participation do

exist, none measure both variables in the same respondents, and few occurred before

1970. An original consideration, then, was to use historical data to argue a correlation

between competitive sport and political participation. However, this raised three

methodological issues. First, as stated in Chapter 2, research into efficacious political

behaviour did not began until 1954, and only then in the United States (Campbell et al.,

1954), while a definition of internal political efficacy did not emerge until the 1970s. In

reality, the last 30 years have seen only limited research into efficacy traits and

behaviours.

The second challenge of historically demonstrating a sport-efficacy relationship is

the need for biographical evidence that could confirm adolescent sport experiences of

female candidates. As mentioned above, two biographies reference sport experiences in

the adolescent life of a future candidate: one for Nellie McClung and the other for Agnes

MacPhail (MacEwan, 1975; Brown, 1999). However, further research indicated that these

two references were the exception, not the rule as biographies leave to chance any

reference to sports that an author may or may not include in the work. Finally, any

attempt to synthesize available historical data with biographical evidence to manufacture

a correlation will create methodological problems with validity and may ignore spurious

relationships. With the above in mind, investigating contemporary local candidates

remains the best option, although the absence of data requires designing an appropriate

vehicle to gather the information. Since academic literature that both investigates this

subject and combines polling data of these two activities appears non-existent, it was

immediately evident that some method of inquiry would be necessary for gathering sport

and political experiences.

Of the three venues of Canadian governance, the local jurisdiction has received

the least amount of research and analytical attention. While there are some general

discussions and analyses of female representation in Canadian local politics (for example,

see: Trimble, 1995; O'Neill, 2009), there are no data that reveal the demographic profile

of local female political elites. To investigate a sport-politics relationship, it became

evident that some form of personal contact with female candidates was necessary to

garner the appropriate information. Personal contact with these candidates would permit

the investigation of specific experiences in adolescent sport, perhaps leading to greater

insights in efficacious beliefs and motivations. As such, several methods of inquiry demanded further consideration.

The first consideration was to conduct personal interviews with female candidates. Personal interviews would allow for a deeper inquiry into the adolescent sport experiences of candidates. It would also permit a more nuanced assessment of competitive attitudes, and allow me to investigate additional influences that may have motivated candidacy. Additionally, some feminist literature argues that personal interviews allow women to better express their own stories and identities, preventing - or at best, minimizing - erroneous interpretation of written responses, interpretations based upon assumed socio-cultural norms (Letherby, 2003). Other methodological strengths of personal interviews include greater flexibility in the structure of the interview, a higher rate of responses and the ability to gather supplemental information that may address concerns of spurious relationships (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981). However, personal interviews can also be challenged by the smaller sample size and concerns about how representative the sample is of the population. Yet the advantages tend to outweigh these concerns. Thus, given the preference for personal interviews, I began research into a potential region of study. Logistically, a concentrated polity of female candidates would minimize travel distance and time between interviews. Yet, the area also required a large population of female candidates to create a credible sample size. From initial appearances, the best region of study proved to be the 23 member communities of the Alberta Capital Regional Alliance (A.C.R.A.), given the concentrated geography and potentially high number of female candidates.

With a preferred research vehicle and defined region in place, the next challenge was finding or assembling a database that met several significant conditions. First, the database needed to be of public record and preferably digitally accessible. These requirements would negate privacy issues in access to information, as well as affording the opportunity to work with the database in Lethbridge. Second, given that the research focused on female candidates only, the database had to have the capacity of sorting subjects by sex. Third, the database had to include current contact information for each candidate. With these three extents in mind, the researcher contacted *Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing* (A.M.A.H.) to determine if such a database existed. Even though previous informal discussions with A.M.A.H. staff and other civic officials seemed to indicate that a repository of this information does exist, the A.M.H.A. claimed that they do not maintain a database of elected officials. Undaunted, this led to enquiries with the *Alberta Urban Municipalities Association* (A.U.M.A.) and the *Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties* (A.A.M.D.C.). While both maintain a database of their respective officials, neither organization would allow me access for my research. Given the unavailability of a Capital Region (or Alberta) database, the search was broadened to include other provincial and municipal governments and associations in English Canada.

The wider search of other Canadian jurisdictions provided some success. Only Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia had databases that met all the necessary criteria. The database maintained by the *Association of Municipalities of Ontario* (A.M.O.) is accessible only by a "per subject" fee for the data. Given that the A.M.O. database had over 1300 female candidates and was nearly three years old, accessing it

was not feasible. The *Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities* (U.N.S.M.) also maintains a

database, but a senior policy analyst with the U.N.S.M. indicated a strong unwillingness

to dedicate any time to assist in the research. Fortunately, *CivicInfo BC*, a "co-operative

information service" dedicated to the "free and open exchange of local government

information", maintains a database that met the requirements: publicly accessible;

searchable by candidate's sex; includes candidate addresses, and; was current within the

past four months. As a result, the *CivicInfo BC* database would act as the frame for

sample group.

The Research Frame

The *CivicInfo BC* database (herein, the *database*) included 458 names of female

mayoralty and councilor candidates in the 2008 local elections: 397 names were of

elected officials, while 54 names were candidates who were not elected to office. The

database included the names of nine other unelected candidates, although seven of these

did not have mailing addresses so were excluded from the research. Since the remaining

two candidates lived in very small communities, their surveys were sent as *General*

Delivery; neither subject responded. Finally, the database contained two duplicate entries.

Therefore, the research frame included 447 subjects, composed of 395 elected officials

and 52 unelected candidates. It should be noted that this conflicts with statistics provided

by the *Federation of Canadian Municipalities* (F.C.M.), which state that 428 females

currently serve in local offices in British Columbia (F.C.M., 2009). However, a telephone

conversation with the Executive Director of *CivicInfo BC* revealed that the 31 additional

representatives *may* be the result of F.C.M. over-reporting female officials in British

Columbia as a result of several quasi-appointed positions (Pugh, 2009). Regardless of this

discrepancy, the *CivicInfo BC* database represented the frame of potential subjects.

Self-Administered Survey

The decision to use the *CivicInfo* database meant re-evaluating the desire to

interview subjects. While personal interviews were still my preferred research method,

using a database from British Columbia provided practical challenges in effectively

acquiring data. The larger, non-concentrated geography meant that personal interviews

would be time intensive (travel within and between communities) and cost prohibitive

(travel, accommodations, long distance telephone). Thus, personal interviews were no

longer a practical design, given the vast territory and increased labour and economic cost.

Additionally, the desire to achieve the largest possible sample outweighed the option of

interviewing a smaller number of councilors located in one or several larger centres, such

as Vancouver, Victoria or Kelowna. Furthermore, limiting the research to three urban

centres would have also restrained the potential diversity of subjects that may occur

between rural and urban constituencies. Therefore, a mailed, self-administered survey

would be a more efficient vehicle for data collection and, if designed properly, could

approximate a personal interview (Edwards et al., 2002).

Inherent in a survey questionnaire is the opportunity to assemble a basic

demographic profile of female local candidates. As stated above, there has been little

exploration into the profile or preferences of either female or male local officials in

Canada. Trimble and Tremblay (2003) provide a general impression of the female

representatives who have served in the House and provincial legislatures over the past 90

years, although it is uncertain whether their profile applies to contemporary local

representatives. The more contemporary research of Lawless and Fox (2005) examines

American female representatives in local government. However, institutional differences

exist between American and Canadian municipal organization, with the former having

greater powers through constitutional provisions such as Home Rule, expanded taxation

capabilities and greater national party influences. These structural conditions vary too

much from Canadian municipal governance to consider as illustrative of the Canadian

context.[vii] Furthermore, the research of Lawless and Fox does not investigate issues of

adolescent sport experiences. Therefore, the present research creates the opportunity to

investigate the potential correlation between competitive sport experiences in

adolescence and electoral politics, and to assemble a profile of local representatives that

may contribute to the understanding of women in local government.

One of the challenges of designing the questionnaire was establishing a format

that would acquire the necessary data but ensure that the survey neither cued nor lead

subjects to respond in a manner that could prejudice the results (Zaller, 1992: 42, 48-9;

Neuman, 2000: 265-6). The research demanded that respondents reveal their impressions

of electoral competition free from considerations of their past sporting experiences. With

this intent in mind, the survey cover letter informed subjects that the research

investigated, "child hood and adolescent experiences that may have contributed to their

participation in local elections" (Appendix I), a general statement that should not have led

subjects to consider the influence of sport on their electoral participation. Additionally,

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[vii] Note that nearly forty years of equal access to sport through *Title IX (Education Amendments)* has shaped
American attitudes towards female competition in a manner unseen in Canada (McDonagh, 2008).

the survey was organized so that questions about competitive sport socialization followed inquiries regarding electoral experiences. Also included were questions that investigated broader aspects of each candidate's identity and experiences. While the survey did not identify themed questions, questions were grouped into specific topics. Generally defined, the themes included: competitive experiences during the first campaign for local office; participation in civic politics; education, work and familial organization during the first campaign for local office; political socialization during adolescence; adolescent experiences in sport; general questions regarding political behaviour, and; political affiliation in local, provincial and federal politics. The line of questions surrounding adolescent sports come near the end of the survey, which ought to minimize the chance that respondents fabricated answers. Given the diversity between themes, a brief explanation is required to understand its inclusion in the survey.

The first theme (questions 1 to 8) examines the respondent's competitive experiences during her first campaign for local office. The questions tended to be open responses that allowed the subject to report, in her own words, her experiences, thoughts and impressions of electoral politics. The intent of this theme was four fold: to gather data on campaign experience; to reveal the subject's opinions on political competitiveness; to discover the underlying influence(s) on her decision to campaign for office, and; to develop comfort with the survey instrument. The second theme (question 9) investigated previous experiences in civic politics, this time asking subjects to identify the community organizations in which they participated and the method of their participation (i.e. volunteer, board member or employee). This line of questioning

responds to social capital research that identifies civic politics as being a main outlet of political expression for women (Putnam, 2000; O'Neill, 2003; Black, 2003; O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006). The desire to test this assumption also included the understanding that participation in civic politics is not a predictor of a woman's candidacy for political office (O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006).

The next section (questions 13 to 15) asked about the candidate's education, labour force participation and familial responsibilities, during her first campaign for local office. These questions helped to determine the amount of work – paid, unpaid and campaign related – subjects experienced during their first attempt at office. From here, the survey inquired about familial and personal experiences with electoral politics during the subject's adolescence (questions 17 to 22). This segued nicely into the section about adolescent sport experiences (questions 23 to 33). To gauge competitiveness, subjects were also asked to list all "non-athletic activities" in which they competed (question 34).

The penultimate section of the survey (questions 35 to 44) investigated the potential presence of the competitive personality type that Woshinsky (1995) identifies in political elites. This segment tested the competitiveness of respondents, even though Woshinsky observed that few political elites will score as "highly competitive" in the rankings (Woshinsky, 2008). The next three questions investigate the subject's partisan leanings towards local, provincial and federal political parties. Interspersed among the themes were single inquiries that deal with non-thematic but pertinent information, such as subject attitudes towards media bias or their overall assessment of the first campaign. In all, the survey took respondents approximately 15 minutes to complete, and included

48 questions on two and one-half, double-sided pages.

One possible criticism of the methodology is that the research *samples on the dependent variable.* Instead of sampling all women in British Columbia, this study surveys only those women who were candidates. Although this places limitations on the analysis, it is necessary given the prohibitive cost and methodological difficulty of a survey of all women in British Columbia. However, to place the present findings in context where possible, this work draws on other research into women's political attitudes, participation in amateur sport and characteristics of women involved in politics. The comparisons are presented with the data, in the following chapter.

In the Field

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the survey package was sent by regular mail on 15 May 2009, to the 447 female candidates listed in the database. The survey package included a single page cover letter (Appendix 1), a Business Reply envelope (pre-stamped and pre-addressed to Dr. Harold Jansen, University of Lethbridge) and the five page self-administered survey. As another avenue of encouraging subjects to participate in the research, the 14 May 2009 *CivicInfo BC* weekly newsletter included a notice stating that a survey was entering the field and that all female elected officials were encouraged to participate (Appendix III). The notice ran weekly for approximately six consecutive weeks. Completed surveys began returning 28 May 2009, with 145 (66.8%) arriving before the 15 June reminder mail out. The final 74 completed surveys arrived between 15 June and 17 November 2009. One-quarter of all returned surveys

(n=56) were from urban centres, while the remainder came from rural locations.[viii] In total, 219 of the 447 questionnaires (48.9%) returned completed, which is a rate of return that is both extraordinary - mail surveys tend to have low response rates (Edwards et al., 2002) - yet somewhat expected as "highly specific populations often have quite high response rates" (Archer et al., 1998: 107).

This chapter reviewed and justified the methodological considerations that ultimately directed the research. The decision to research only women avoids normative discussions about the masculinity inherent in, and the male dominance of, electoral politics. Choosing to study local candidates tends to mitigate the influence of gate-keepers and political parties, while creating the possibility for a more diverse and experienced population of study. Finally, the decision to mail a self-administered survey led to a larger research frame that broadened the potential for greater participation as well as more statistically significant findings. The next chapter presents the results of the research, analyzing two main components of the data: the profile of subjects and attitudes on competitiveness. The data also demonstrates that a strong correlation exists between competitive sport experience during adolescence and political participation. Finally, the research appears to indicate that there is a positive correlation between female candidates with competitive sport experience and neutral sentiments towards political competition.

[viii] Urban centres include the C.M.E.s and C.A.s with a core and commuter population of 10,000 or more.

Chapter 4: Results

Where the previous chapter outlined the methodological choices behind the research, this chapter presents the significant findings from the survey questionnaires. The results are presented in three sections to organize the data for a clearer presentation. The first section examines the demographic profile of respondents, revealing trends in age, education, occupation and familial organization of respondents. This section ends with a brief comparison of the present results with the historical survey of female representatives in the House of Commons, the Senate and provincial and territorial legislatures collected by Trimble and Tremblay (2003). The intent of this discussion is to investigate if local candidates differ in their profile from the characteristics of more partisan political institutions. As discussed in the previous chapter, the profile of local candidates ought to be different from provincial and federal candidates, given the necessity for certain social and economic conditions, as well as the differing political systems and institutions. The second section briefly discusses issues of partisanship, the electoral experience of the respondents and attitudes of political behaviour. The last section reveals the data surrounding adolescent sport experiences and presents supporting evidence of the potential relationship between competitive sport and electoral politics for female candidates. Although the chapter dedicates some discussion to the profile of female candidates in British Columbia local government, the objective of this chapter is to highlight the significant findings.

Section I: Profile of Respondents

Age

As discussed in Chapter 1, Canadian girls have had greater access to competitive sport opportunities only since the early 1980s. Sport – like politics – had established barriers that hindered the participation of girls and women. When considering the historical development of women's sport in Canada (see: Hall and Richardson, 1982; Prentice et al, 1987; Morrow et al, 1989; Hall, 2002) we recognize that there ought to be distinct age cohorts in sport participation of adolescent girls. If the last four decades have increased the opportunities for girls to develop mastery experiences in competition, then there ought to be a corresponding increase in competitive sport experience for the sample population.

As social and policy changes occurred, sport participation for adolescent girls increased, which allows us to classify subjects into three age cohorts: women born before 1952 (Cohort I); women born in and between 1952 and 1964 (Cohort II), and; women born in and since 1965 (Cohort III). Table 3 identifies each cohort, the last year of the cohort's adolescence (18 years of age), the cohort's access to sports, politics and the economy, and significant legislative and social changes that signaled improved opportunities for women in Canadian sport. The key legislative benchmarks chosen were the *Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* (1970) and the *Women's Program* (1980), as both policies substantially affected the roles and opportunities for women in Canadian society. At the same time, Second Wave feminists worked tirelessly to highlight and remove many of the legislative, social and economic barriers facing

women, creating greater access and opportunities in female sports. Combined, these

changes generated substantial differences in sport participation between the first and third

Table 3: Age cohorts by their access to competitive sport opportunities in adolescence.				
Born	**Born ... … Adolescence**	**Access to Sport**	**End of cohort event**	**Social Changes**
Cohort I	Pre-1952 ... … 1970.	Many barriers for women due to sex-role and gender-role socialization. Only a limited number of sports were available, mostly through school.	Report of the *Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* (1970) revealed social and legal inequalities.	The *R.C.S.W.* placed "women's issues" on the national agenda, focusing on female inequality.
Cohort II	1952-1964 ... … 1966 to 1980.	Moderate access to sports programs through school and the community. Girls played more male – dominant sports, although barriers still existed.	Fitness and Amateur Sport Canada launched the *Women's Program* (1980), increasing sports opportunities for girls.	Second Wave feminism pushed for formal and substantive recognition of sex and gender equality.
Cohort III	1965 and on ... … 1981 and on.	Women seeing greater access to sporting opportunities. Significant growth in sports programs (school and community). Fewer barriers exist.	N/A	Constitutional protection against sex / gender discrimination. Women have greater chances / choices in sports, politics and work.
Each age cohort represents a general assessment of the sporting opportunities for adolescent girls. The end of cohort event is the introduction of legislation that may have had some influence upon the access to sport.				

cohorts. Although Table 3 references sport as a beneficiary of these changes, women's

participation in the economy (as workers) and in politics (as representatives) also

increased (McAuley & Blissmer, 2002).

As indicated in the previous chapter, nearly 50% of the subjects in the frame

returned completed surveys. Of these, 84.7% of respondents represented the first two age

cohorts. It is impossible to tell exactly how the respondents compare to the population of

candidates, as not all candidates provided this information for the *CivicInfo BC* database.[i]

The survey asked respondents to provide their "year of birth" and to indicate the number

of elections in which they had campaigned for local office, thus allowing for a calculation

of both the present age of representatives as well as subjects' age during their first

campaign for local office. Presently, the median age of respondents is 56 years old, while

the median age of candidates during their first campaign is 48 years old (Table 4).

Comparing these figures to the approximate median age of women in British Columbia

(42.5) reveals that the median age of "first-time" candidates is approximately 6 years

| Table 4: Demographic Profile of Respondents: Age (Current and First Campaign)		
	Current Age	Age at First Campaign
Mean	56.88	48.14
Median	56	48.00
Mode	56*	43.00
Range	29-89	25 - 72
* Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.		

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[i] Returning Officers in each electoral district submitted candidate information to CivicInfoBC, although not all R.O.s submitted additional information of unsuccessful candidates, such as home address, age, et cetera.

older than the median age of B.C. women, but that elected female representatives are nearly 14 years older.

Education

The questionnaire asked respondents to identify the highest level of education completed at the time of their first campaign for local office. Subjects with a high school diploma or some postsecondary education comprise 41.3% of responses, while the majority (58.7%) had completed their college or university education (Figure 1). Of

Figure 1: Highest Level of Education: Respondents and Women in the Labour Force
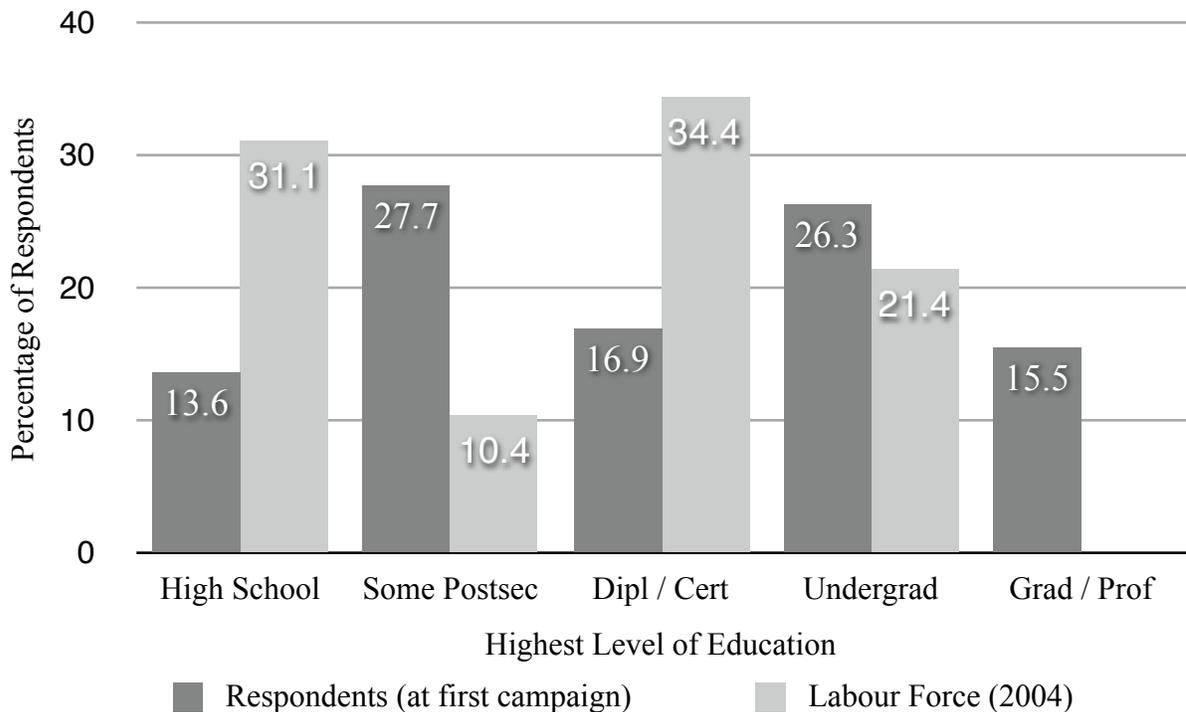
interest is the comparison of these findings with Statistics Canada's 2004 report of "educational attainment of the labour force" (Krahn, Lowe and Hughes, 2006: 48). Even though the educational attainment of women in the labour force generally matches this larger grouping (41.5% with high school or some postsecondary: 55.8% with advanced education) almost every value stands in contrast between respondents and female labour

force participants. For example, Statistics Canada reports 31.1% of women in the labour force have, at most. a high school education, whereas only 13.6% of candidates identified the same. Conversely, while only 21.4% of the female work force have a university degree, 41.8% of female candidates hold a bachelor, Masters or professional degree (Krahn et al., 2006: 48-50).[ii] This finding may support the research that links high levels of education with increased levels of political participation. Furthermore, the fact that the female candidates have higher education than women in the labour force may underscore the belief that women must achieve high standards to be considered as serious candidates.

Employment

Almost eighty percent (79.4%) of respondents were employed during their first campaign: 111 (63.8%) full-time and 63 (36.2%) part-time (Figure 2). While there is diversity in the occupations held by these candidates, three of the top five occupations tend to have postsecondary requirements (financial sector, education and health care), which would support the higher educational achievement previously identified.[iii] The majority of respondents (71.3%, n=124) stated that they committed at least 30 hours per week to their paid employment at the time of their initial campaign (Figure 3). Committing to these levels of work hours meant that candidates had to balance labour force responsibilities with home and familial responsibilities, as well as undertaking the activities of an election campaign. Where familial responsibilities also exist (discussed below), then female candidates may even experience a *third shift*. The third shift is the

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[ii] Krahn et al. (2006) do not identify the statistics for graduate or professional degrees. Also note that those with less than a high school diploma are included in the 31.1% statistic.

[iii] Obviously, not *all* jobs within these three sectors require a postsecondary education, although most employers require a minimum of a college or university certification.

Figure 2: Labour Force Participation During First Campaign

● Not in Labour Force	● Part-Time	● Full-Time
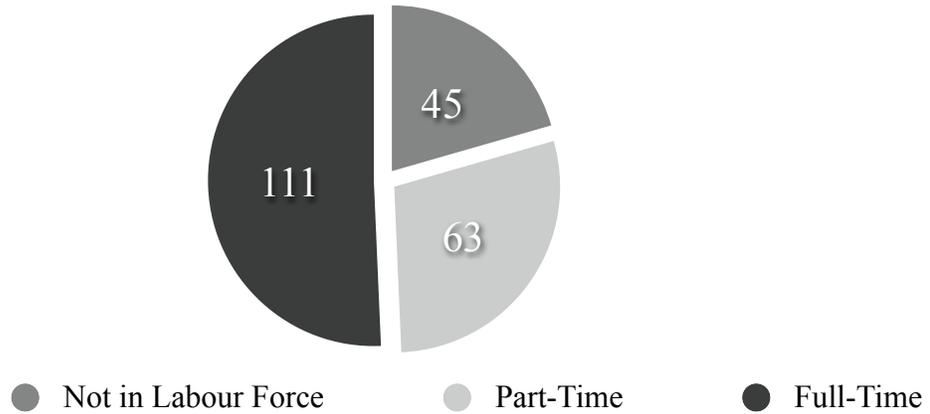
Figure 3: Hours of Paid Labour Force Work per Week
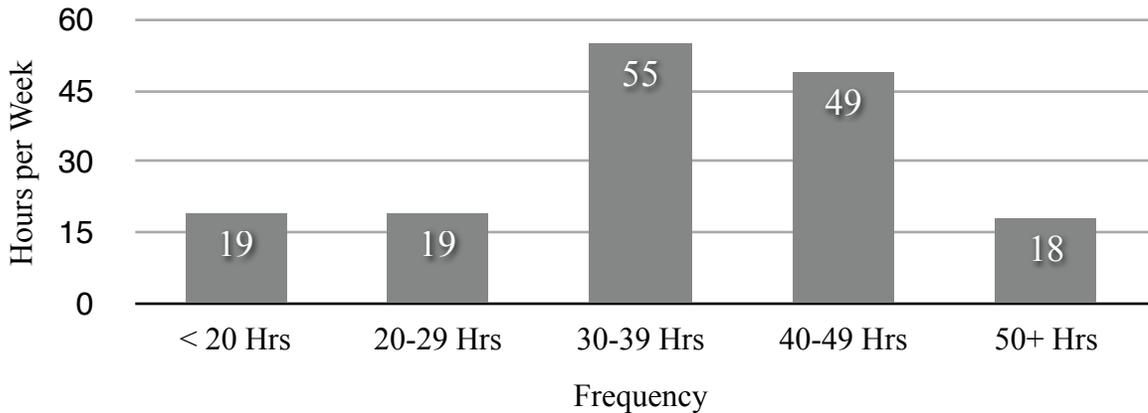
concept whereby the effort required to maintain a full time occupation, provide familial

obligations and campaign for office increases the physical and emotional demands of the

candidate, while decreasing the availability of her own relaxation time (Hochschild,

1989; Trimble and Tremblay, 2003:40). Again, the notion of exceptionalism requires the

ability to juggle multiple demands, which requires tremendous organization. This may

change in the future as "recent Canadian studies have identified single parenthood,

gender ideologies and women's relative earnings as influencing time spent on household

tasks and how these are divided" (Krahn et al., 2006: 177). Until that time, women

considering electoral politics may continue to believe that their age and advanced

education may help them overcome the "deficiencies" of being a female candidate, where the deficiency is not being male (Black and Erickson, 2003).

Children and Family

For male politicians, questions regarding the care of their children and familial organization are rare, especially in context of their private sphere responsibilities as a father (Bashevkin, 2009). The general assumption is that a spouse or partner (usually female) provides family care, which allows the male candidate to focus on matters of the public sphere (Pinker, 2009). Traditionally, media have tended to scrutinize and criticize female candidates for placing their electoral ambitions above their family obligations (Bashevkin, 2009). This trend may be changing as Lawrence and Rose (2010) demonstrate that media coverage of the Clinton, Obama and McCain campaigns was relatively equitable regarding the respective candidate's family, appearance and children, during the 2008 Primary and Presidential elections. Even though male politicians appear to be receiving similar media criticism regarding their looks (Martin, 2010), the issue here remains centered on caregiver responsibilities. Certainly, local politics are not as intense as provincial, federal or Presidential elections, but female candidates for municipal office may still factor their family obligations into the consideration to campaign for office. As such, the survey posed questions to determine if family responsibilities did indeed affect the decision to campaign.

Slightly fewer than half the respondents (42.6%) reported that a child lived at home during the first campaign (Figure 4).[iv] Of this group, 82.9% had two or more children at

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[iv] In this research, a *child* is 18 years of age and younger.

Figure 4: Children at Home During First Campaign
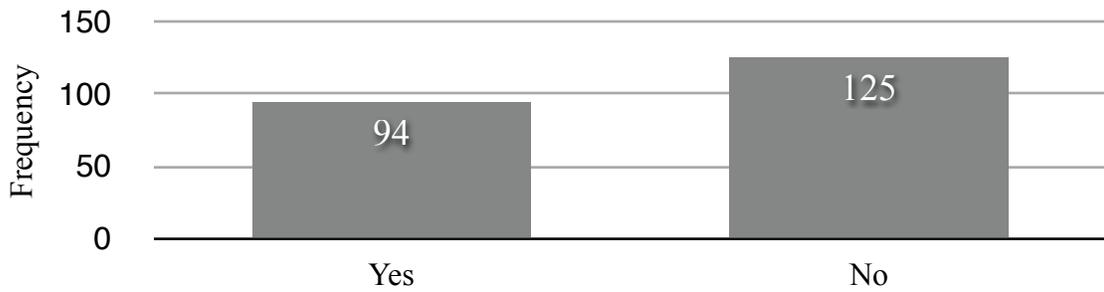
Table 5: Children in the Home During the First Campaign	
Number of Respondents with Children	42.7% n= 94
Number of Children at Home	Mean = 1.77 Median = 2.0
Range	4
Youngest	18 months old*
Mean Age	4.94 years old
Median Age	9 years old
Modal Age	17 years old
* One respondent noted that she was pregnant during her first campaign.	

home with the average age being 4.94 years old (see Table 5). The survey asked for the

age of the youngest child at home as, hypothetically, responsibilities for care tend to

decrease and the child's independence tends to increase with age. Of respondents with

children, 85.8% worked in the labour force, with 57.6% of those respondents working 30

hours per week or more. As discussed above, these candidates may have undertaken the

third shift during and following the campaign. The questionnaire did not ask respondents

to identify if care responsibilities included a dependent child over 18 or an elderly parent.

Figure 5: Primary Caregiver Resonsibilities
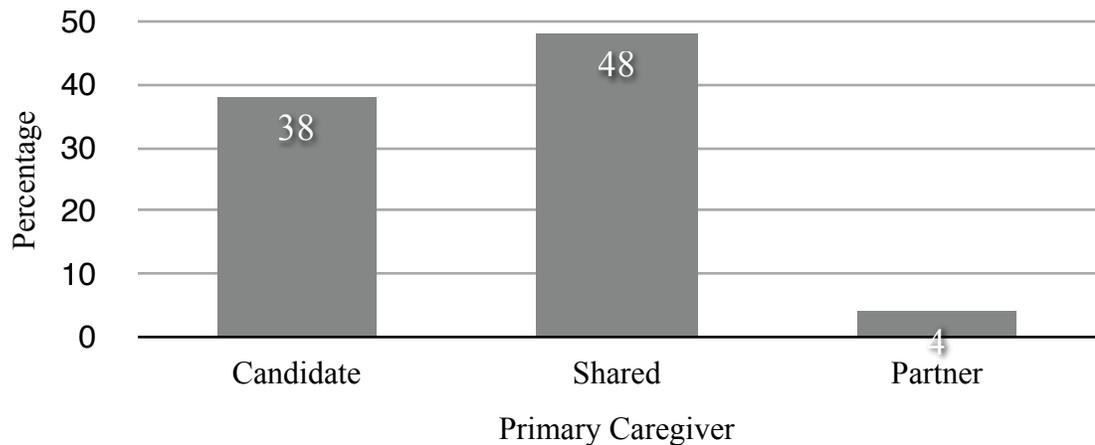
Three subjects included a written response indicating that they had additional

responsibilities in one of these two scenarios.

Primary Caregiver

Of the respondents who had a child at home during the campaign, a little more than

half stated that they shared primary caregiver responsibilities with their spouse or partner,

while 42% identified themselves as the primary caregiver (Figure 5). The most surprising

finding of this variable was that only 4% of the spouses or partners are the primary

caregiver. This contrasts with the fact that slightly more than 10% of Canadian men are

the primary care giver in their familial relationships (Statistics Canada, 2009). The

assumption would be that a higher-than-normal percentage of men would fulfill this role

for their female partners, given that campaigning (and elected office) responsibilities will

decrease the amount of available time for other daily activities. In this situation, it

appears that women are incorporating more into their day, while at the same time not

delegating or abdicating childcare responsibilities to a spouse or partner. However, there

may be two explanations for this finding.

First, as stated above, the older the child the less there tends to be a need for hands-on supervision and care. While almost all respondents identified themselves as the primary caregiver, the research also showed that the children at home tended to be older (Table 5). The higher concentration of teenaged children among respondents may indicate that the parenting demands for most of the candidates may not be as significant as for candidates with younger children. Being a primary caregiver for a 15 year old may not be as daunting or time consuming as with a 5 year old. It is also possible that a respondent self-identified as the primary caregiver, but they use an alternative form of domestic care, such as a nanny or daycare. Again, the onus for care would fall upon the female candidate, although there ought to be fewer circumstances in this scenario.[v] Regardless of familial organization, this additional pressure on female candidates does not address the necessity for equity in the role of primary caregiver.

Hesitant to Campaign

Trimble and Arscott (2003) argue that women contemplating candidacy consider their familial responsibilities as part of their overall decision to campaign for office. When asked if family obligations made them hesitant to campaign for office, almost two-thirds (63%) responded that familial responsibilities did not make them hesitant to campaign (Figure 6). When asked if their family obligations might prevent them from effectively carrying out their duty as a councilor, only 12.5% agreed or strongly agreed that it would (Figure 6). Of the respondents who expressed hesitancy due to familial obligations, one-third agreed or strongly agreed that family obligations would prevent

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[v] The survey did not ask subjects if non-parental care was provided for children.

Figure 6: Familial Influences on the Campaign and Duties of Office

Hesitant to Campaign for Office Due to Family Obligations
Family Obligations May Affect Duties of Office
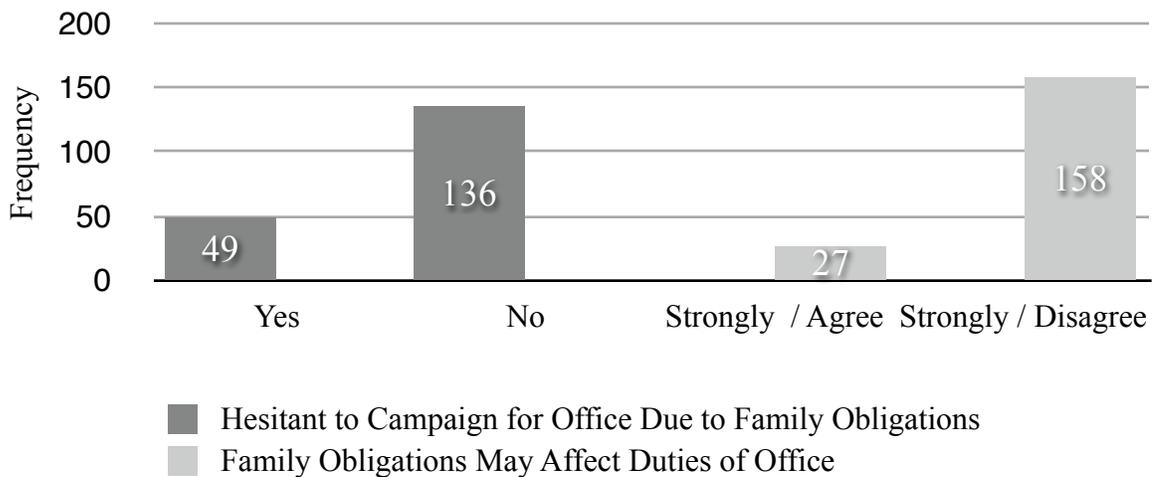
them from effectively carrying out their duty on council. This would indicate that the

majority of subjects hold high efficacy in their ability to effectively carry out the duties of

office while still managing familial responsibilities. However, for some candidates,

family obligations carried a larger value in the consideration of becoming a candidate.

Comparing Data

Trimble and Trembley (2003) examined several socio-demographic characteristics

of the female politicians who served in the House of Commons, the Senate and provincial

legislatures between 1917 and 2000.[vi] The characteristics they examined include country

of origin, marital status, age at first election or appointment, education and occupation.

This research did not inquire about the former two characteristics, but it did look at the

final three. Overall, the profile of respondents is relatively consistent with the study

presented by Trimble and Tremblay (2003), although some minor variations do exist.

Table 6 demonstrates that, in their first campaign for local office, the female candidates

tend to be spread relatively evenly across age groups, whereas M.P.s and M.L.A.s tend to

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[vi] Trimble and Tremblay (2003) data includes female Senators, which is not included in this research.

Table 6: Data Comparison: Age, Education and Occupation of Female Politicians: Survey Respondents and Trimble / Tremblay Research (as a percentage)				
		Respondents	**Trimble / Tremblay**	
			M.P.s	**M.L.A.s**
Age at First Campaign	Under 40	21.6	18.7	26.5
	40-49	33.9	46.0	44.9
	50-59	30.3	30.7	25.1
	60+	14.2	4.7	3.7
Education[1]	Less than College or University	39.9	42.5	48.7
	College or University	58.7	57.4	51.3
Occupation[2]	Professional	45.9	86.4	77.9
	Self-employed	16.5	2.6	4.7
	Technical / Manual	10.5	5.2	3.7

[1.] "Less than College or University" includes both complete or incomplete High School, as well as incomplete college or university. "College or University" includes completed college or university education only.

[2.] The Trimble and Tremblay data also includes 'homemaker.' However, their data reported occupational history whereas this survey asked occupation "during the first campaign for office."

be between 40 and 60 years of age. Compared to M.P.s and M.L.A.s, significantly more

women make their first campaign for local office after 60 years of age. In total, almost

80% of female local councilors, M.P.s and M.L.A.s enter electoral politics after 40 years

of age. Given that the median age of women in British Columbia is approximately 43

years old (Statistic Canada, 2006), this lends support to the argument that female

politicians tend to be older when they enter elected office (Trimble and Arscott, 2003;

Trimble and Trembley, 2003).[vii] The reasons behind this later entry into electoral politics

is discussed below.

The highest completed level of education for local councillors is also consistent

with the Trimble and Tremblay findings, although a greater number of M.L.A.s only have

a high school education, compared with M.P.s and councillors. Interestingly, the

percentage of female M.P.s with a postsecondary education has been falling steadily since

1994 (Trimble and Tremblay, 2003: 50). This may reflect a greater diversity in the

educational and professional qualifications of female candidates, which could indicate

that exceptionalism may be on the decline as candidates and voters perceive greater

equality between male and female political elites.

Finally, social and economic changes in society appear to have influenced

occupational choices. Candidates listed their most common occupation as "self-

employed" while diversity was evident in the number of women identifying careers in

more technical or manual occupations. Gendered professions still exist, as teaching and

health care still dominate as full time labour occupations, and women still comprise the

majority of part time employees in retail and support services. It is worth noting that the

Trimble and Tremblay (2003) data reported the occupational history of their subjects,

whereas this survey inquired about occupational status during the first campaign for

office. The difference in reporting methodology means that none of the M.P.s or M.L.A.s

were considered as "unemployed" regardless of their labour force status. Thus, the

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[vii] The 2006 Census shows that the median age of women in B.C. was 41.5 years. Since the 1996 Census, the median age of women in British Columbia has increased by 0.5 years annually. Assuming a consistent rate of aging, the approximate median age of British Columbia women would be 43 years, in 2009. http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/highlights/agesex/pages/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=PR&Code=01&Table=2&Data=Count&Sex=3&StartRec=1&Sort=2&Display =Page

professional occupation disparity between respondents and the Trimble and Tremblay research could stem from the fact that the latter assigned an occupation to all Members, regardless of their participation in the labour force. The present research only asked candidates to indicate their occupation during their first campaign, and respondents indicated "unemployed" if they were not working at that time.

The results of the survey demonstrate that female candidates for local office have relatively similar educational traits to female M.P.s and M.L.A.s, but that changes in the labour force has broadened the work opportunities and experiences for locally elected women. As for the age of local candidates, M.P.s and M.L.A.s, there is relative similarity (±5% variation) across two age cohorts (under 40 and 50-59) between female representatives in the three legislative venues. However, nearly one-half of female M.P.s and M.L.A.s began their political career while in the 40-49 cohort, whereas only one-third of the survey respondents first campaigned during that decade of their life. The real variation exists with women over 60 years of age, as a much larger percentage began local political careers during this cohort (14.2%) versus women in the House of Commons (4.7%) or provincial legislatures (3.7%). This may be the result of the confidence that comes from extended civic participation and accumulated life experiences within a local community, not to mention the freedom from familial and occupational commitments.[viii] With the profiles of education, occupation and age in mind, we can examine the characteristics of civic and electoral political participation.

[viii] In the provincial and federal domains, this could also reflect a prejudice against age within the system of party gatekeepers.

Section II: Politics
Civic Politics

Research indicates that men and women tend to define *politics* in different ways.

Where men tend to view politics as an electoral and legislative activity, women tend to

view politics as any activity focused on achieving some policy outcome (Putnam, 2000;

Hamilton, 2005; Bashevkin, 2009). Thus, there are two definitions of politics presented in

Figure 7: Civic Political Participation
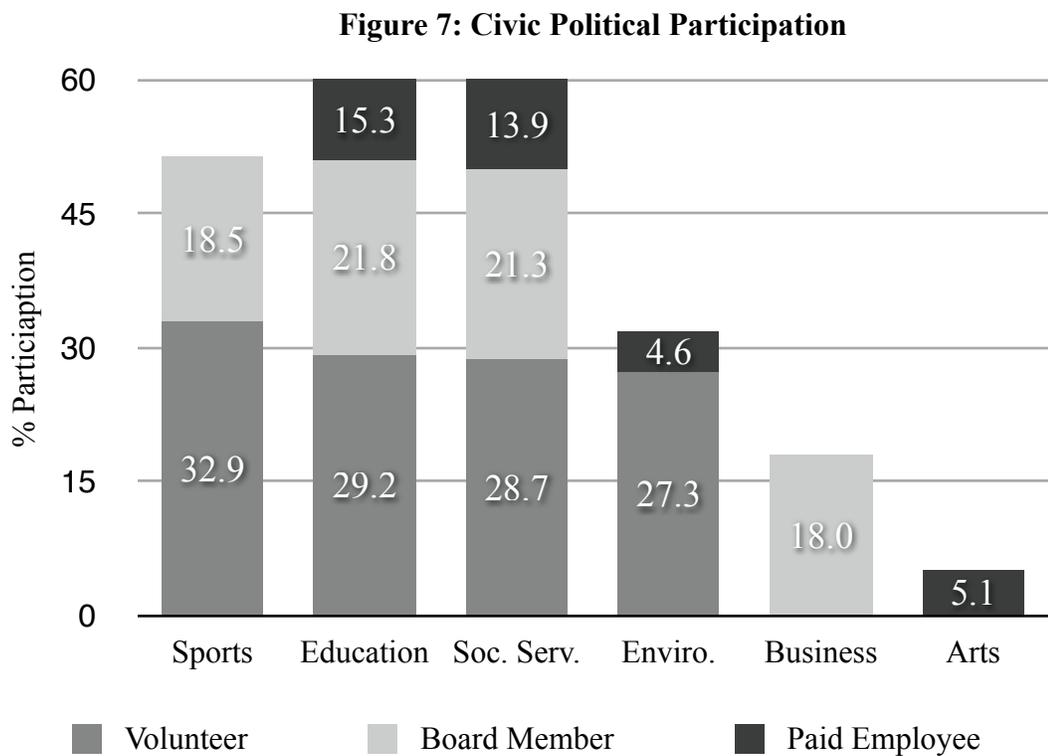
this work: electoral politics and civic politics. The survey asked respondents to list the

civic organizations and agencies in which they have participated, categorizing their

participation as a volunteer, board member or paid employee. Consistent with the

literature, almost all respondents (94.9%) listed some form of civic participation before

their first election campaign, with an average participation in 4 community organizations

($\overline{X}$ = 4.59). Of the three methods of participation, volunteerism was the highest form of

civic political activity, with volunteerism in a sports organization (32.9%) being the most

pursued activity (Figure 7). Education scored the highest for board membership, which

included parent council committees and school advisory boards. It also ranked number

one for paid employment, although virtually all respondents in this category identified

their career – teacher, educator, librarian – as part of their community service.

It is essential to note that a woman's civic political activity is not necessarily a

predictor of her future participation in electoral politics (O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006).

O'Neill (2002) argues that, "many women view politics as a relationship and a web of

connections and responsibilities to others" (47), and that they tend to participate in civic

society "because it is community oriented and located close to home, and because these

more informal structures are likely to embody values that women have a greater tendency

to espouse: [for example] collectivism versus individualism" (45). Women tend to

participate in civic politics out of a responsibility for their community and out of a desire

to "get things done" (Vickers, 1998: 12). The significant point here is Vickers' research

identified that much of the volunteer community work women accomplish is done for

altruistic purposes (1997: 34) as few women translate their civic capital into electoral

capital, at least not at a comparable rate in which men do (O'Neill and Gidengil, 2006).

Thus, for women, civic political activity is not necessarily a pathway to electoral politics.

Electoral Partisanship

The survey asked subjects to report their party preferences towards local, provincial

(British Columbia) and federal political parties, respectively. When asked which

provincial political party they lean towards, 40.2% identified the British Columbia

Figure 8: Provincial Party Support

% Support (y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50)

Liberal: 40.2
New Democrat: 27.0
Green Party: 6.0
N.D.P. / Green: 6.0
Undecided: 17.2

Figure 9: Federal Party Support

% Support (y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30)

Conservative: 25.5
Liberal: 21.8
New Democrat: 19.9
Green Party: 5.1
Two Party: 7.9
Undecided: 15.7
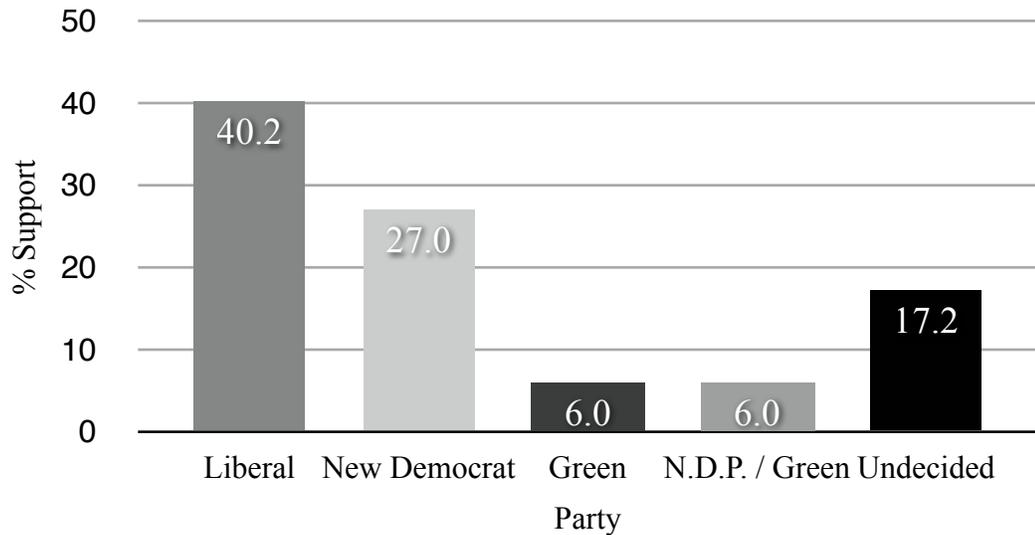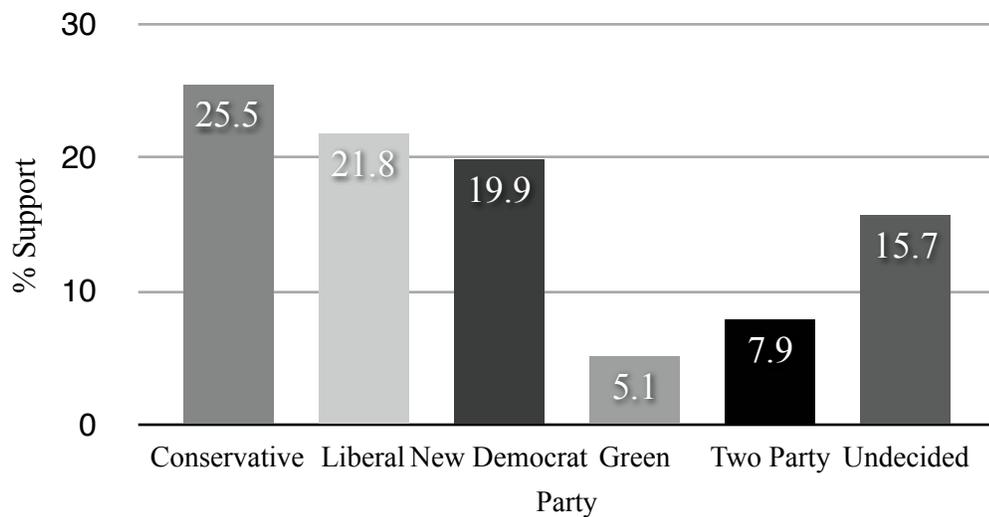
Liberal Party, and 27.0% indicated the New Democratic Party of British Columbia

(Figure 8). Given that these two parties dominate British Columbia politics, this finding

is not unusual nor surprising. However, these results do conflict with a 9 May 2009

Angus Reid poll that found a gender gap in voter preferences, between the B.C. Liberals

and B.C. N.D.P. In the poll, women equally supported the Liberals and N.D.P. (43%),

whereas men favoured the Liberals (51%) over the N.D.P. (35%), a 16% difference

Angus Reid, 2009). The fact that the subject group tended to reflect the male trend may

result from the sample's interaction with the governing Liberals. As locally active councilors or participants, this group may perceive some of the positive benefits that have recently accrued to municipalities from the positive relationship between the B.C. Ministry of Community and Rural Development and local governments, such as the *Gas Tax Agreement (2008)*, the *Communities Component Agreement (2008)* or the *Climate Action Charter* (U.B.C.M., 2008). Of course, the support for the B.C. Liberal Party could also reflect the tendency of female candidates to be right of political centre, a condition not explored in the present research.

When asked about federal party identification, the results are noticeably different as the three major parties hold relatively similar support among respondents, from 20.0% to 25.1% (Figure 9). While only a quarter of respondents support the federal Conservative Party, nearly 47% of respondents support 'leftist' parties, which supports the Gidengil et al. (2003) thesis that Canadian women tend to lean towards political parties traditionally situated on the 'left' of centre. Note the dichotomy of electoral politics within a

Figure 10: Number of Local Election Campaigns
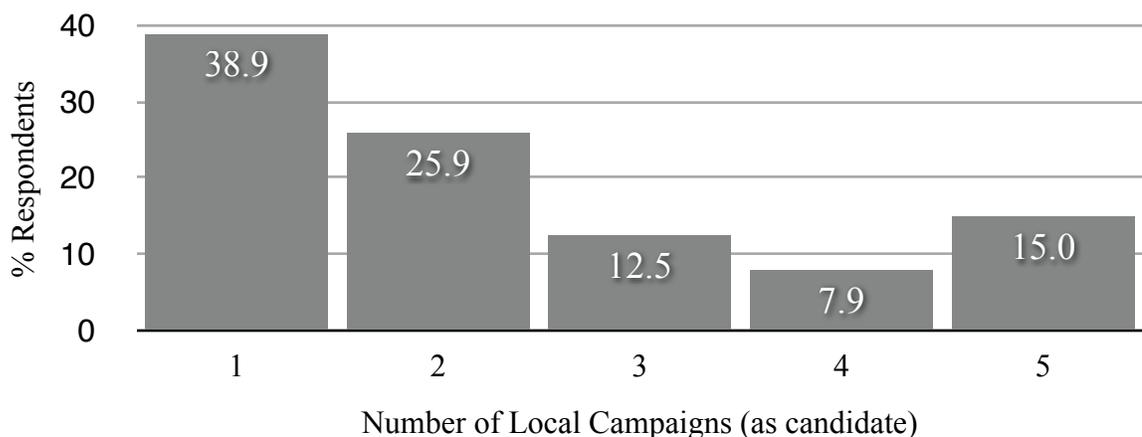
federation; many of the respondents who supported federal parties on the 'left' also identified a leaning for the provincial Liberals, considered a 'right' of centre party.

Electoral Campaign Experiences

For 38.9% of respondents, the 2008 Local General Election was their first

campaign as a municipal candidate ($\overline{X}$=2.57, Range = 13) (Figure 10). The remainder

had previous candidate experience, with almost 30% having campaigned in five or more

local elections. Nearly a quarter of respondents (24.8%) indicated that they had

previously campaigned for another office at the local, provincial or federal level.

However, only 35.3% of these previous candidates pursued election to a provincial or

federal office only. This appears to indicate that women still participate more in local

electoral politics than in federal or provincial venues, although whether local

participation is a preference or merely the result of the structure of federal and provincial

political institutions remains unknown (Trimble, 1995).

Section III: Sport
Participation in Adolescent Sport

With the demographic and political profile in mind, it is now possible to examine

the potential relationship between competitive sport experience in adolescence and

attitudes towards electoral competition. When asked about their adolescent athletic

experiences, 79.9% (n=175) of respondents reported that they had indeed participated in a

team or individual sport. In fact, the median number of sports in which respondents

participated was 3, with a mean rate of 2.92. Just over 58% of subjects identified 3 or

more sports, with one respondent reporting her participation in 9 different competitive

sports. When these responses were categorized into the three age cohorts, they revealed a

supporting fact of the thesis. The survey results showed that there is a percentage increase

in sport participation from Cohort I to Cohort II, and Cohort II to Cohort III (Table 7).

The high percentage of adolescent sport experience in each cohort is significant; from the

data, a correlation between adolescent sport experience and electoral political

participation appears evident for female political elites.

Table 7: Participation in Adolescent Sport by Age Cohort			
Age Cohort	Total Responses / Cohort (n)	Subjects with Adolescent Sport Experience (n)	Subjects with Adolescent Sport Experience (%)
Cohort I	92	69	75.0
Cohort II	93	76	81.7
Cohort III	34	30	88.2
TOTAL	n = 219	n = 175	79.9%

The increase in participation rates across cohorts may also indicate that, over time,

girls were, and are, gaining greater opportunities for competitive sport experiences during

their adolescence. The growth between Cohort I and Cohort III alludes to changing

opportunities. The 16% increase to a participation rate of 90% may also be the harbinger

of the growing influence that sport plays in socializing females with the necessary

competitive behaviors for electoral participation. This would certainly support Webb's

(1969) "professionalization of attitudes towards play" in the socialization of girls towards

competitive behaviour. Whether such socialization was the result of social change, policy

pressures, greater sport opportunities or some other influence remains uncertain and is

beyond the scope of this research.

As stated, the data demonstrates that there was a percentage increase from cohort to

cohort in the participation rate in adolescent sports. The significance of this finding

occurs when comparing the rate of respondent participation with the participation rate of the population of Canadian adolescent girls. Figure 11 illustrates the difference in participation rates in adolescent sport between the Canadian adolescent female population and the sample group, from 1969 to 1998. First, the increased participation rate from

Figure 11: Adolescent Sport Experience: Population versus Respondents
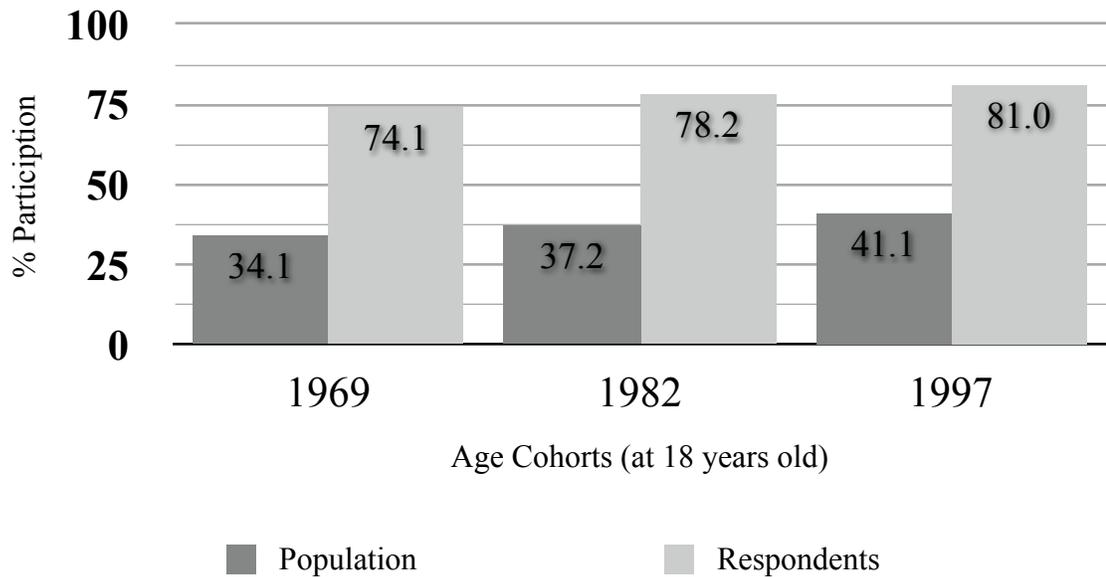
Cohort I through to Cohort III is consistent with the trend of the Canadian female adolescent population; that is, the rate of participation of adolescent girls in the Canadian population was increasing at a relatively similar rate as the changes from Cohort I to Cohort III in the sample group. This would indicate that there was no unusual or special circumstances affecting either the respondents or the data. Second - and of significance – is the comparison of participation rates between respondents and the population of adolescent girls in Canada. The female political elites surveyed for this research report participating in adolescent sports 110% to 140% times more than the national average for each age cohort (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 1983; Craig et al.,

1983; Russell et al., 1992; Craig et al., 1998). Given the tremendous disparity between

respondents and the population, and the 79.9% adolescent sport participation rate of

respondents, the present research appears to support a strong correlation between

competitive sport experience and electoral participation. However, this is only the first

Table 8: Respondent Competitiveness in Adolescent Sport		
Competitive in …	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1 Sport	46	34.1
2 Sports	33	24.4
3 or More Sports	57	41.5
TOTAL	136*	100
*Total sample = 219. Played adolescent sports = 175.		

step in proving the hypothesis. For as much as participation in adolescent sport was

intense for respondents and higher than the population, it is also necessary to investigate

the competitive attitudes that come from socialized competitive behaviours.

Competitive Experiences in Adolescent Sport

While a high percentage of respondents have adolescent sport experience, it is also

important to consider if respondents identified themselves as being competitive in these

sports. Of the 175 respondents with adolescent sport experiences, 77.6% (n=136) stated

that they were consciously competitive in one or more sports (Table 8). The median

number of sports in which respondents identified competitiveness is two, although there

appears to be a trend whereby the greater the number of sports played, the greater the

competitive identity. When cross tabulating these 136 respondents with assessments of

campaign competitiveness, 72.6% (n=98) held a neutral or positive sentiment of their first

Table 9: Cross tabulation: Campaign Competitiveness and Competitive in Sport				
Assessment of Electoral Campaign Competition	**Competitive in Adolescent Sports**			
	Yes: One Sport	**Yes: Two Sports**	**Yes: Three or More Sports**	**Total**
Positive Sentiment	48.9% (n= 22)	51.8% (n=18)	53.6% (n=31)	51.9% (n=71)
Neutral Sentiment	20.0% (n=9)	16.1% (n=5)	23.2% (n=14)	20.7% (n=28)
Negative Sentiment	31.1% (n=14)	32.3% (n=10)	23.2% (n=13)	27.4% (n=37)
TOTAL	(n=45)	(n=33)	(n=58)	(n= 136)

campaign competition (Table 9).[ix] Half the respondents expressed positive attitudes towards the competitiveness of the election campaign, which contradicts a premise of this work that the majority of subjects would simply report neutral sentiments towards campaign competition, that they did not consider or had minimal consideration of electoral competition. By contrast, it appears that these political elites actually enjoyed the competitiveness of their first election campaign.

As a comparison, the same data analysis occurred using the 175 respondents with adolescent sport experience. As with the 136 competitive respondents, over 70% of this group had a neutral or a positive assessment of the campaign competition, with 49.1% identifying it as a positive experience (Table 10). However, 28.9% (n= 63) expressed negative sentiments about electoral competitiveness, such as, "I was very nervous about

[ix] The assessment of campaign competition is based on responses to Question #4 in the survey (Appendix II, p. 157). Respondents claiming an exuberance towards or anticipation of electoral competition were scored as indicating "positive" statements. Subjects who declared statements such as "did not consider it" or "it wasn't a concern" were scored as "neutral." Respondents who indicated a displeasure for competition (general or electoral) were scored as making "negative" statements.

Table 10: Cross tabulation: Adolescent Sport Experience and Campaign			
Assessment of Electoral Campaign Competition	Adolescent Sport Experience		TOTAL
	NO	YES	
Positive Sentiment	45.4% (20)	50.0% (87)	49.1% (107)
Neutral Sentiment	27.3% (12)	20.7% (37)	22.0% (49)
Negative Sentiment	27.3% (12)	29.3% (51)	28.9% (63)
TOTAL	100% (44)	100% (175)	100% (219)

competing" and "I don't like the competitive part of elections – I just want to do the work" (Anonymous Respondents). Of the 51 respondents who have adolescent sport experience, but who expressed a negative sentiment towards electoral competitiveness, 72.5% (n=37) still identified themselves as being competitive in adolescent sport. Positive assessments of the first campaign far outweigh the negative and subjects overwhelmingly expressed a collegiality with other candidates.

Respondents with negative assessments of competition tended to equate competitiveness with negative politics; that is, subjects considered a bad interpersonal experience with another candidate - direct or observed - as a negative competitive experience. Some respondents reported these negative experiences, indicating that confrontations of "name calling," "campaign sabotage" and "aggressive behaviour" often emanated from male candidates, creating a common theme underlying negative sentiments towards electoral competition:

I am a competitive person by nature so the thought of competing was OK with me. However, a couple of the male candidates felt that I required special help. They felt I may get my "feelings" hurt or take things personal. I [believe] that if I wasn't as strong natured as I am and take [their] comments with a grain of salt, I may have felt intimidated and out of my element. (Anonymous respondent)

Another respondent received a more direct attack on her sex: "The second time [I campaigned] I had no problem with the competitiveness other than the fact that, 'I was a woman' was used negatively; i.e. 'the mayor should be a man'" (Anonymous respondent). A further example relates the competitiveness of sports to electoral politics: "As an athlete, competition is not intimidating to me. However, an election campaign is quite different … I was not prepared for the personal attacks" (Anonymous respondent). Thus, these negative interpersonal experiences seem to reflect respondents' beliefs that negative behaviours should not occur in the spirit of competition. The hyper-competitive masculine behaviour often inherent in electoral competition appears to conflict with the

Figure 12: Sports Gendered "Feminine"
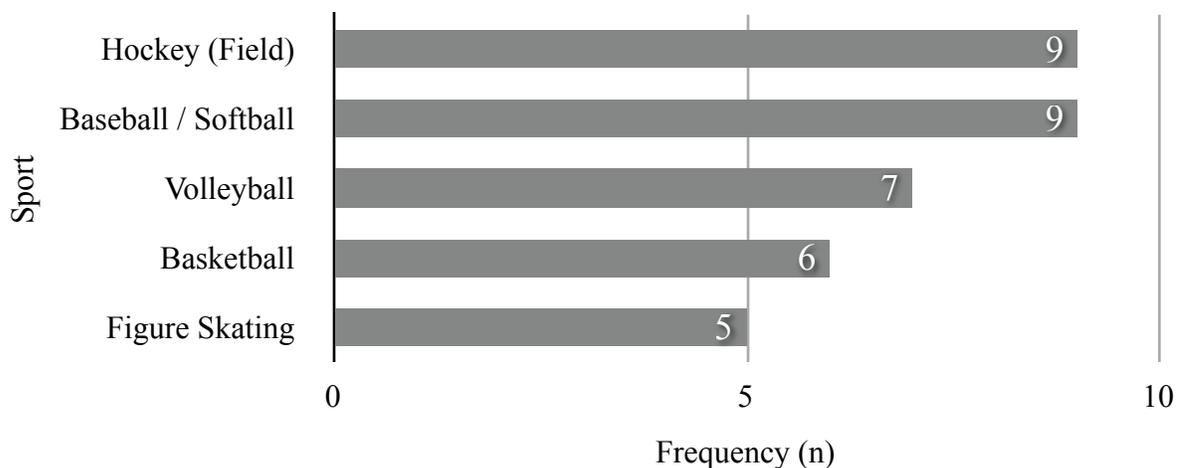
socialized elements of fairness and cooperation society emphasized in "girls' play" especially when candidates express the behaviour through Machiavellian actions (Webb, 1969; Carroll, 1989; Kimmel, 2004; Feltz et al., 2008). Therefore, it appears plausible

that a subject who reported a bad campaign experience due to hyper-competitive masculinity, may express negative sentiments towards electoral competition. In effect, negative feelings towards the competitiveness of electoral politics may be the reaction to the behaviour of one or a few excessively aggressive or competitive candidates.

Gendering sport

The 175 subjects who participated in adolescent sports listed 641 sport experiences ($\overline{X}$= 3.7 sports per respondent), but only 34.3% of respondents gendered at least one of the sports they played as either masculine or feminine. There were 53 sport experiences that respondents considered as feminine sports, and 25 gendered as masculine. Figure 12 lists the top five sports that respondents gendered feminine. Even though response percentages are low relative to the overall number of reported experiences, the 2-to-1 ratio of gendering sports as female may indicate two noteworthy points. First, as argued in Chapter 2, most of the respondents would have had limited opportunities to participate in organized female sports. Limited opportunities often meant that adolescent girls played "boys'" sports, but with the modified "girls' rules" (Hall, 2002). Both basketball and volley ball adopted "girls' rules" to supposedly accommodate the smaller frame, limited strength and fragile reproductive capacity of adolescent girls (Hall, 2002). For adolescent girls, the change in rules could imply that "boys' rules" were the "normal rules" of the game. It is possible, then, that girls gendered their sport feminine since their rules deviated from the "normal" male game. This does not answer the question of why some respondents internalized the sport as feminine while others did not make such an inference. Resolving this question involves further research into the socialization of

gendering preferences.

Second, it appears that gendering a sport as feminine may be a response to the socialized norm of the environment (Cragg et al., 1999; Kimmel, 2004; Pinker, 2009). For example, both urban and rural respondents equally identified the sports of field hockey and softball as feminine, which appears to be a logical response. In North America, field hockey is almost exclusively played by girls, whereas it is almost entirely a male sport throughout the rest of the world. The same holds true of softball, which is a modified version of the male-dominated sport of baseball. Softball began - and still operates - under "girls rules" which has had the effect of socializing it as a sport for girls. As such, our society has gendered field hockey and softball as feminine sports. However, there can be irony when gendering a sport. Our culture tends to gender figure skating as a feminine pursuit, yet the media places the "men's program" at the pinnacle of competitive figure skating. Here, the emphasis tends to rest on the athleticism and the strength and power displayed in the jumps, while downplaying the grace and artistry of the sport, at least without women present (McIntosh, 1987: 218).

Although these two points may provide some explanation why some girls gendered their sport as feminine, the fact that the majority of respondents (63.5%) did not gender their sport(s) as either masculine or feminine may demonstrate an additional point. It is possible that gendering a sport as feminine, or not seeing it as gendered at all, may indicate that female candidates socialized with adolescent sport experience appropriate activities as their own. Appropriating a sport as part of one's identity may turn the emphasis away from the activity being gendered, which might allow the female athlete to

develop self-confidence in her proficiency of the activity (Lenny, 1977; Bandura, 1982; Feltz et al., 2008). The attempt to professionalize women's football in England may be the best example of sport appropriation.

For much of the Twentieth Century, female athletes and organizers (female and male) attempted to create a professional women's football league in Britain (Williams, 2003). However, gender and social norms prevented any league from becoming a reality, even though the female players dedicated themselves to developing the sport in a manner that appealed to their personal tastes and style. As Williams (2003) observes, the female players tended to maintain an "equal but separate" philosophy on their ability to compete at an elite level (20). For these athletes, it was not a question about playing a man's game, it was about exercising their freedom by playing their own game:

> Competition was stylistically diverse and quite a contrast from the stable, bounded development of male football through hierarchies and leagues. The organization of the matches shows the quite explicit appropriation of existing aspects of the game […] and their reconstitution as a form of entertainment with a female focus. (Williams, 2003: 36)

For these competitive female athletes, the gendering of the sport was society's concern. Playing football in their own style was their concern.

The assumption of the present work, then, is that competitive sport socialization in adolescence provides girls with experiences they may internalize, which they later incorporate into her other pursuits. These girls - like the British footballers - may simply disregard the gendered assessments of others and focus on their own efficacious beliefs and abilities to advance personal goals (Bandura, 1982). Therefore, this appropriation of competitiveness may translate into neutral or positive assessments of the competition

inherent in election campaigns. Thus, the female candidate may either ignore or suppress both her competitive anxieties and the gendering of electoral politics. By doing so, she is able to strengthen and emphasize her core competencies, as she already knows she is able to compete.

Outliers and Contrary Findings

As with any human research, outliers and atypical responses exist. In this case, outliers exist in two separate forms. The first group encompasses respondents who had adolescent experiences in competitive sport, but who either expressed or demonstrated a lack of confidence in their internal political efficacy, or who held a negative assessment of the competitiveness in electoral politics. One respondent is representative of this grouping. She was an adolescent between 1968 and 1973, during which time she participated in 7 sports. She identifies herself as a competitive swimmer who won championships in "all swim strokes" as well as several track and field events. She did gender her sports: soccer and hockey as masculine; synchronized swimming, figure skating and ballet as feminine. She did not list any competitive non-sport adolescent activities, nor did she participate in any community organizations in her adulthood. Her responses to the survey questions that probe Woshinsky's (1995) 'gamer' typology indicate that she does not have a game-type personality.[x] She summarizes her confidence in this manner:

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[x] "Gamers" are political participants who see politics as a game. Gamers tend to be "robust, assertive and enthusiastic" and believe that, "being a team player" and "sticking to the rules" are essential parts of the political 'game' (Woshinsky, 1995:172).

I believe because of my age I did not actually have the confidence to run for public office until I was 50. I knew I had the knowledge, skills and abilities but I did <u>not</u> have the confidence. When I deliberate on why that was I believe it was because of my environment, that was filled with traditional values. It took me a long time to feel comfortable with this path. I topped the polls in the last election and came 2nd [the] 1st time I ran. Others see me more confident or worthy than I do. (Anonymous respondent)

This response is fairly representative of those who claimed sport experiences in adolescence, but who signified low political efficacy and confidence. However, I am not certain that the crisis of confidence most of the counter examples experienced was an issue of internal political efficacy. For example, in the passage above, the respondent states that she "knew she had the knowledge, skills and abilities" for the position, which indicates that she has high internal political efficacy for the office. Her lack of confidence may be a strategic consideration in her ability to "win" the campaign, which may (in this case) be a reflection of the "traditional" community in which she lives, or the fact that she had no community-based or non profit agency participation before the campaign. Future research ought to probe issues of confidence, to clarify the possible differences between assessments of efficacious abilities and the relative presence or absence of certain characteristics (birth order, occupation, academics, et cetera). From the point of research methodology, personal interviews may have provided me with the ability to address and delineate between issues of "confidence" and issues of differing socialization.

The second group of outliers includes the 44 (20.2%) of candidates who did not have competitive experiences in adolescent sports. Within this group, there are several factors that may have socialized competitiveness. First, of these respondents without adolescent sport experiences, 36.4% (n=16) identified competitive experiences in non-

athletic pursuits, such as music, social clubs and academia. As stated above, it is possible

that competitive socialization stems from a multitude of competitive experiences – not

just sports – so these events could have influenced competitive behaviours. Second, over

half of this group (54.6%, n=24) completed a post-secondary program, with 20.5% (n=9)

holding a graduate or professional degree. Competitiveness can occur in academic

Table 11: Statement Questions: Ranked by Agreement, in Percentages					
Statements	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neither Agree / Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
A) I could describe my political style as "assertive."	16.7	34.7	28.2	14.8	4.6
B) Politics is fun.	22.2	31.0	28.2	11.1	5.1
Rows may not equal 100% as data does not include non-responses.					

endeavors, especially the self-competition that can exist in the pursuit of advanced

degrees (Wilson, 1989; Schapiro et al., 2009). Third, 54.6% (n=24) stated that they

"sometimes" or "often" discussed politics with their parents. Research by Gidengil,

O'Neill and Young argues that, "early exposure to politics in the home can serve to

counteract the effects of female socialization" especially when the mother is the role-

model of political activity (2008:1). It is possible that, for some of these respondents,

familial socialization normalized the competitiveness of electoral politics. Indeed, it is

possible that all of these conditions contribute to confidence in electoral competitiveness.

The survey also posed questions drawn from the work of Woshinsky (1995; 2007),

specifically dealing with his "gamer" typology of the behaviour and personality of

political elites. Three of the questions are particularly relevant, as they attempt to reveal

Table 12: How would you rate your first campaign for local office?	
Response	Percentage
Very Positive Experience	38.0
Positive Experience	30.1
Neither Positive nor Negative	11.6
Negative Experience	2.8
Very Negative Experience	3.2

gamers through issues of political style, competitiveness and teamwork. Respondents rated each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (5). Table 11(A) demonstrates that female candidates generally see their political style as being assertive (51.4%), which is a characteristic of Woshinsky's game typology (1995:172). The absence of a strong negative response to this statement and the relative strength of a one-third neutral response, may indicate that the respondents require assertiveness more often in their political activities, with specific venues requiring more of a need than others. Meanwhile, Table 11(B) also emphasizes the gamer attribute in most candidates, as 53.2% consider politics to be "fun." As above, the relational split between the strong agreement, neutral responses and weak negative answers may indicate the necessity for gamesmanship more often than candidates may desire. It is possible that this response relates more to the aptitude and interest candidates hold in their desire to participate in electoral politics.

Respondents also provided an overall rating of their experiences during their first election campaign in local politics. Even with the negative statements expressed (see: Table 9 and Table 10) almost 70% of respondents reported that the first campaign was

either a positive or very positive experience (Table 12). Certainly, there are many factors that could create negative assessments, such as personal levels of optimism, confrontation with voters, situations that occurred during the campaign regarding health, work or family, or other interpersonal stressors that may have occurred from citizen engagement. Generally, the experience was positive for almost all candidates.

Two additional findings are worth noting. First, the survey asked respondents if they believed that, "the media portrays women in politics in an unbiased manner." Nearly 46% disagree with this statement, while over one-third neither agree nor disagree. The large percentage of neutral responses may indicate that these women tend to receive fair treatment from their own local media, which does occur in the smaller communities (Wagner, 2009). However, it could also indicate that most candidates do not perceive media reportage as biased in its coverage of female politicians. As this was the only question posed on media perceptions of female politicians, the response is open to interpretation. The second revelation of the research may counter the axiom, *politics is a bloodsport*. The survey asked respondents if they, "received positive encouragement from any elected official(s)" during their first campaign for local office. Surprisingly, 82.4% of respondents reported that they did receive very encouraging support from both male and female officials and candidates. Nearly a quarter of respondents (22.2%) identified that the greatest influence on their decision to campaign for office the first time came from an elected official.

Politics as a "Team" Activity

As argued above, gender socialization tends to mould girls towards cooperation,

which usually manifests itself as an emphasis on team building or 'cheerleading' the

accomplishments of others (Heywood and Dworkin, 2003). To test this hypothesis, the

survey asked if "it is important for council to work as a team and members to be team

players." Over 80% (83.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the importance of a "team"

and "team player" approach to the work. This appears to support the collectivist approach

females generally hold in their participation with others. However, one subject who

answered "no" included a written response with her returned survey:

> I have often thought [team] was applicable. But more recently I think it's a bad
> analogy for a political group such as a municipal council. What's a team? - a
> group of people with a common goal, with a coach to tell them how to achieve it,
> and a captain to keep them on track. What's a council? - a group of people with a
> broadly common goal (but many differences about the specifics of any particular
> issue); there is no captain (the mayor is a member of council and has certain
> particular powers but is not the boss); there is no coach (I suppose the CAO
> comes closest to that, s/he is an advisor not a director). (Anonymous respondent)

This subject makes an astute observation and a tremendous argument against

contextualizing politics as sport. The idea of politics-as-a-team mentality may be more

applicable within the party structure of provincial and federal politics, given certain

collective emphases, such as a Party ideology or platform, the use of a Whip, or the

partisan bravado of Question Period. In the case of local politics, this respondent may be

correct: Municipal councils are a group of individuals mostly focused on the larger

objective of local governance. Beyond that, the independence of candidates and

representatives means that every methodology and objective of municipal government is

open to debate. Thus, in agreement with the respondent, it may be best to not describe

local politics as a 'team' activity. If local office is not a collective pursuit, then the subject group must have another influence behind their decision to participate.

Although the survey yielded good data to establish a profile of female candidates in British Columbia local elections, it did not reveal a statistical significance between competitive sport socialization in adolescence and neutral attitudes towards electoral competition. This may have been predictable as the questionnaires were sent to a sample group who are not part of a normal distribution of the population, which makes statistical significance harder to achieve (Greenhalgh, 1997). In this case, the sample was drawn from a list of female candidates currently operating in a competitive environment, who had already committed to electoral participation. However, a strong correlation between competitive sport socialization and positive assessments of electoral competition appears evident, given the high percentage of female candidates with sport experience, and the high percentage of cohort participation, relative to the Canadian population.

As for the 20.3% of respondents (n=44) who did not have adolescent sport socialization, it should be noted that all but 8 of these subjects reported competitive experience in non-athletic pursuits, such as arts, clubs or academia. This offers one possible conclusion; even if competitive sport experience during adolescence is one method of competitive socialization towards electoral participation, other sources of competition may also contribute to developing these necessary competitive behaviours. Thus, the data points to a broader context of competitive socialization. Obviously, more research and perhaps a different methodology into this hypothesis would provide a better understanding of the sport – politics relationship.

The survey results provide a general picture of the profile of a female candidate in B.C. local politics. During her first campaign for local office, the candidate will usually be older than the national average and work in the paid labour market, committing a minimum of 30 hours a week to her job or career. She is very active in the civic community and is twice as likely to have a university degree than women in the wider labour force. Even though the candidate may lean towards the B.C. Liberals, her federal inclination is more likely towards a party on the left of the political spectrum. If she has children at home, she either shares caregiving responsibilities with a spouse or partner, or she is the primary caregiver. The chance that her spouse is the primary caregiver is almost nil. Her career in local politics will average three elections, but she has the propensity to campaign in more. Although she will probably consider the impact candidacy (and elected office) will have on her family life, she will probably feel she can manage familial obligations. Likewise, she will tend to believe that family responsibilities will not adversely affect her ability to fulfill the duties of office. Finally, given the strength of responses, there is nearly an 80% probability that the candidate will have had competitive experience in adolescent sport.

Chapter 5: Discussions

The final chapter of this work further discusses the issue of appropriation and considers it in conjunction with the predominance of adolescent sport experiences within the subject group. The work of Lenny (1977) is a significant part of this debate, as her research demonstrates the applicability of a competition barrier. Further discussion of Gidengil et al. (2003) also describes how the very nature of our democratic institutions create the need for competitive behaviours, which may explain the dearth of women in our elected legislatures. Finally, the research findings, observations and theories are incorporated into an understanding of the role competition may play for female candidates in considering, preparing for and participating in, electoral politics.

The Argument

Some evolutionary biologists have forwarded a theory that generations of social and cultural systems may have contributed to the minute genetic differences between races (Carroll, 2005; Wilson, 2007). If genetic variations can occur from social and cultural system influence, then one could posit that gender-role socialization and gendered experiences may also contribute to the differences between men and women; in this case, the acquisition and processing of experiential knowledge (Collins, Clark and Shrager, 2008: 358). Since our sexed and gendered identities interact differently with the "fluid assemblage of the meanings and behaviours that we construct from the values, images and prescriptions" in our social interactions, women and men tend to have dissimilar experiences (Kimmel, 2004: 94). For the present argument, their is no greater amalgam of "values, images and prescriptions" than within our political culture.

As ambiguous and indefinable as political "values, images and prescriptions" can be, they do encompass what is described as political culture. Wiseman (2007) defines *political culture* as "the way of life of a political community or polity" (12). Dyck (2005) expands the definition to mean "the sum of the politically relevant values, beliefs, attitudes and orientations in a society" (210). Central to both definitions is that citizens will define the "way of life" and establish the "relevant" context for political discourse and participation. As Siaroff (2000) argues, political culture can make a significant contribution to the inclusion of women in elected office: "More egalitarian societies - specifically those with early female political rights and leftist values and traditions as expressed through socialist welfare systems - have more women in parliament than other systems" (209). Siaroff points to the fact that more women often serve in our single-member Parliament than in some other countries with M.M.P. and P.R. systems (204). This point is significant in the context of this thesis as it identifies that our political culture tends to be more open to female candidates than some other democratic industrialized nations. However, this does not mean that our political culture is exempt from socialized preferences, as it still must define the "politically relevant" discourse for the polity.

Our political culture carries masculine and patriarchal tendencies that also reinforce the socialized preferences of the political culture, including competitive and individualistic behaviours (Brodie, 1989; Bashevkin, 2009). As social beings, the diverse personal histories of women and men will tend to manifest themselves through cultural activities that become socialized behaviours. The result is a political culture that contains

established normative "values, beliefs, attitudes and orientations" (Dyck, 2005: 210). If the image of an elected official is male or masculine, then female participants and femininity become portrayed as abnormal in our traditionally male-centric political culture (O'Neill, 2002: 45). By its nature, political culture will continue to socialize this orientation because socialized perceptions exist in, and travel through, the basic structure of our representational and symbolic images: our language.

Linguistic Socialization

Language is the primary link between the various reference points of what we know and believe (Pederson and Cadierno, 2004). Language is not simply a grammar of sounds, gestures or script but, rather, it also includes the social and cultural knowledge that accompanies the representation. For example, create a mental image of a firefighter and an obstetrics nurse standing together. Is the firefighter wearing a hat? Is the nurse wearing a hat? Chances are that two things occurred. First, the conjured image of the firefighter and nurse was that of a male and female, respectively. Second, the linguistic representations found in the answers to the questions were probably 'yes, *he* (the firefighter) is wearing a hat' and 'no, *she* (the nurse) is not wearing a hat'. The significance of the exercise is that the answer was probably gendered to the occupation. Language informs us and transmits the cultural norms; in this case, that a firefighter is male and an obstetrics nurse is female. The result of this mind exercise demonstrates the significance of our social and cultural knowledge, as mental images and language stem from what we know. Gender-role socialization develops the knowledge that informs language, to the point that our descriptions of social organization generally use feminine

and masculine. Essentially, language transmits socialized norms and cultural rules, which governs our knowledge and behaviours:

> Language, seen as one domain of human cognition, is ultimately linked to other cognitive domains, such as the capacity for visualizing and reasoning. As such, it mirrors the interplay of psychological, cultural, social, and other factors. This implies that linguistic structure both depends on and influences our conceptualizations. These, on the other hand, are conditioned by our experience of ourselves and the external world. With this cognitive approach, it is impossible to separate linguistic knowledge from extra-lingual knowledge. [...] Language cannot be regarded as merely an instrument of communication in some culture. The language is also a fundamental component of that culture, with a special status: to some extent, the language internalizes the culture. (Pederson and Cadierno, 2004: 153)

The fact that, "language internalizes the culture" is evident if we consider the linguistic representations of the word *church*. In English Canada, the word may conjure a visual representation of a simple Protestant place of worship, including the iconography and basic philosophy that supports the impression. This mental image of a church may be a response to the social and cultural experiences of many Anglo-Canadians, given the predominance of Protestantism in many social settings. However, for a Francophone, the word *church* usually provides a completely different visual representation as *une église* may represent a grand Catholic parish, and its associated iconography. Again, this visual representation stems from socializing influences that the Catholic Church has had upon the politics and culture of Franco-Canadian society. Although *church* may carry the same semantic meaning for Anglo and Franco-Canadians, respectively, different visual and connotative representations exist within the respective linguistic cultures.[i]

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[i] The converse is *not* true in French: *une église* represents a Catholic or Anglican church, whereas *un temple* represents any Protestant building of worship (Corréard and Grundy, 2001: 834).

The experience is different in the mind of a truly bilingual citizen (O'Grady and Archibald, 2004). Since language internalizes differing representations, a multi-lingual speaker ought to contextualize situations and discussions within each language (Peterson and Coriero, 2008). This has the effect of providing the bilingual (or multi-lingual) with a greater understanding of "otherness" (Lichem, 2003). This process ought to be similar for the female candidate: apply the experiences of competitive sport socialization in adolescence to the competitive behaviours required for electoral politics. Competitive sport socialization in adolescence may cause the female teen to internalize the conditions of competitive behaviour. In turn, her adolescent socialization may minimize her concerns about electoral competition, while providing her with the appropriate competitive behaviours. However, a female candidate's socialization in competitive adolescent sport may have also helped her see electoral politics as a gender-neutral activity. Competitive sport socialization may provide women with a comfort in understanding and operating within the language of competitive electoral politics.

Language of Media

The two preceding mental exercises demonstrate how our language perpetuates conditions of our society and culture. This may be the process by which female candidates, socialized in competitive adolescent sports, come to consider the institutional practices of electoral politics. A gendered mediated dialogue and game framed reportage both transmit an internalized culture of masculinity in a hyper-competitive environment. Political discourse and reportage use masculine-dominant language that perpetuates the male hegemony of electoral politics (Sampert and Trimble, 2003). As a result, media tend

to assume a male-as-the-norm position when they assess female candidates, scrutinizing the image and other nonpolitical characteristics of female politicians, not their policies or ideas. This special attention of women in politics can dissuade other women from participating as candidates (Bashevkin, 2009: 34-5). The gendered mediation thesis argues that, "the image and language of mediated politics, therefore, supports the status quo (male as norm) and regards women politicians as novelties" (Ross and Sreberny, 2000: 93).

Media generated imagery further contributes to this by using "metaphors and clichés of warfare, sports and general violence" (Gidengil and Everitt, 2003: 568). The result is that the socio-cultural experiences of women in our society conflict with the symbolic representations of our political institutions. The socialized aggression and competitiveness of a boy's "hard play" remains completely in line with media discourse and electoral politics, while perpetuating the competitive socialization of girls in "soft play" only reinforces the competition barrier. However, the candidates socialized in competitive sport during their adolescence do not appear repelled by the symbolic representations of the male-as-norm narrative of electoral politics. Instead, these women appear to have a social and cultural knowledge that allowed them to negate the hyper-competitive masculinity of formal politics. Again, the presumption of this work is that competitive sport socialization may have caused these women to internalize competitive behaviours and competitive language.

The gendered mediation thesis underscores this particular point. Gidengil and Everitt note that, "the heart of the gendered mediation thesis is the notion that the news is

a masculine narrative, dominated by stereotypically masculine images" (2003: 568). Do the narrative and imagery provide an effective scaffolding on which all citizens can build electoral participation? The short answer is 'no' as the experiences of girls socialized in "soft play" will not necessarily include the appropriate socio-cultural knowledge to participate, given that they have no connection with the language or representations. Henrietta Moore (2007) offers one reason for this:

> Our own desires are moulded within the structures of language which are the stuff within which these cultural preoccupations are expressed. Aspects of our own desires are therefore already aspects of others' desires. Our goals, aspirations, expectations and fantasies are ours and yet other to us. We internalize these desires as we internalize language, and yet like language they never become completely ours, they remain foreign to us and thus our unconscious is constituted in and through the discourse of the other. (54)

With the subjects of this research, competitive sport experience in adolescence offered them the opportunity to internalize the context, language and representations of competition and, coincidently, to the gendered mediated and game framed language of electoral politics. It may not be by chance that these candidates decided to campaign for office once they develop the interest and aptitude for electoral political participation. The language and imagery surrounding their adolescent competitive experiences provided them with the cognitive scaffolding to overcome the competition barrier and compete for office. Therefore, the adolescent socialized in competitive sport will internalize competitiveness, building her socio-cultural cognition. In turn, this may support her efficacious beliefs that she can compete in a context where her skills and abilities are relatively equal to that of male candidates.

Knowledge from Competitive Sport Experiences

Competitive sports are unique subcultures of society. Each sport has its own language, customs and dominant ideology (Putnam, 2000). Mastery experiences in competitive sports socialize adolescent girls with both a general and specific appreciation and knowledge of the sport subculture (Heywood and Dworkin, 2003; Feltz et al., 2008). The young athlete internalizes the language and socio-cultural context of gamesmanship, which scaffold her understanding of associated competitive behaviours and activities, whether they are directly related to sport or not. Thus, for the former (or present) female athlete, the aggressive, hyper-competitive and masculine discourse of electoral politics lost its foreignness through her socio-cultural cognitive awareness. Her athletic conditioning helps regulate her competition anxiety, the emotive component of her physiology (Feltz et al., 2008). Therefore, adolescent sport experience may also expand the emotional conditioning of the female candidate, permitting her to develop an emotive, physiological and social comfort in the competitiveness of electoral politics.

Emotional Cognition

Attaching emotion to self-efficacy may be problematic for some readers. The writings of Weber generally succeeded in equating emotions with irrational thought in Western academia. Although Weber "recognized the possibility of 'mixed' types of action […] he generally assumed that rational action could not be emotional, and vice versa" (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta, 2001:2). However, the relationship with self-efficacy runs deep as "emotions play an important motivational role" in the process of efficacy development and expression (Dunkel-Schemer et al., 1992: 67). Both female and

male candidates ought to have the social and cultural knowledge to initiate behavioural responses from emotive cues, such as anger, happiness or sadness. The female candidate with competitive sport experiences would have familiarity with the physiological tensions and stress that may impede performance in a competition. Her mastery experiences in sport efficacy may help her minimize the emotional and physiological stresses, giving the candidate a sense of self-control in stressful situations. The result ought to be a greater confidence in political achievement situations.

Lenny (1977), whose research addressed gendered responses in social comparison situations, argued that, "women are clearly more likely than men to express low self-confidence in achievement situations" such as campaigning for elected office (2). Lenny demonstrates that the low assessment of self-confidence in her subjects stemmed from self-ascribed or socially imposed sex identities and roles. However, Lenny argues that three caveats accompany this generalization. First, she posits that tasks gendered as masculine negatively influence a woman's self-confidence. Lenny's findings show that a woman's efficacious beliefs will tend to decrease when she assesses her ability to execute a task gendered as masculine. Note that this assessment was not a post-task reflection, but a self-evaluation of her ability before undertaking the task. Second, if a woman genders a task as masculine, her self-confidence will fall if there is no "clear and unambiguous" feed back on her performance of the task (3). In this situation, when self-evaluating her performance, a woman will compare herself to the other participants, most often perceiving herself as less capable in the task. Finally, Lenny suggests that the task environment itself can lower self-confidence, if the activity is competitive or

comparative. Throughout her research, Lenny demonstrates that self-ascribed or socially imposed sex identities and roles influence the self-confidence of women.

Unfortunately, Lenny's three caveats of criteria are the antitheses of Canadian electoral politics. First, masculinity and male-centrism dominate our political institutions and, as argued above, is found in the media's use of warfare, sports and violence imagery to describe and simplify politics (Gidengil and Everitt, 2003; Gidengil et al., 2003). Thus, society generally perceives and frames electoral politics as a masculine or male-centric activity, not one of gender-neutrality. Gender socialization pushes girls towards the more cooperative and collaborative domain of civic politics, thus creating a natural disassociation between women and electoral politics. This response may cause most women to view political participation as a male pursuit, seeing legislatures as the grottos of masculinity. Such assessments would have the effect of lowering the self-efficacious assessments of a potential female candidate's decision to participate. Low efficacy assessments of ability may inevitably eliminate her desire to campaign for office.

Second, our electoral system reveals voter choices, not voter intentions or motivations. Voting is akin to a multiple-choice test; a voter selects a candidate but does not justify why she / he made that ballot choice. Voters have many factors to consider before casting a ballot: the personality of the local candidates, partisan ideology, issue publics and reference standards, among others (Cross, 2004). While durable partisans may faithfully choose a candidate because of party loyalty, flexible partisans - the growing majority of Canadian voters - may be motivated by a single, indiscernible issue or event mere days before the election (Clark et al., 1996: 55-59). The absence of party

organization and mobilization in most local politics removes an element of the decision

making process. However, acquiring information about candidates becomes harder,

which adds heuristics and general impressions to the decision-making process. Pre-

election polling and exit polling can inquire about the reasons behind ballot choice, but

even these are a partial image of a voter's motive, and may not truly reflect a voter's

rationale (Hoy, 1989). Certainly, one can hypothesize about a campaign's success or

failure as some reasons are more evident than others. In the end, however, the electorate

does not give a candidate any performance response – unambiguous or otherwise – that

articulates the reasons behind a voter's decision.

It should be noted that changing the electoral system will not necessarily resolve

the issue of feed back, but it would offer some assurances through representation. For

example, electoral systems that use proportional representation (P.R.) tend to elect more

women to office, especially under multimember list-P.R. systems (Larserud and Taphorn,

2007). Although the issue of feed back remains, multimember P.R. systems require

greater cooperation among contenders and, depending on allocation formulas, can allow

for more diverse representation. If female candidates can participate within an electoral

structure that allows for narrower representation (i.e. advocating for, or satisfying smaller

communities of voter interest), then it becomes possible for the candidate to receive more

feed back from the constituents her ideology or values represent. Under the S.M.P.

"winner takes all" format, representative interests need to be broad to acquire the

necessary votes, a factor that does not provide for accurate assessments of performance.

The last point relevant to Lenny's research is that election campaigns are both competitive and comparative events. In its rawest form, an election is a competition for votes. An election campaign mobilizes resources to secure the minimum number of votes required to gain a seat in office (Amy, 2000). This requires competitive strategies that counter the tactics of opposing candidates, while simultaneously highlighting one's own virtues and leadership. Establishing these strategies requires a reflective evaluation of one's strengths, weaknesses and core competencies, followed by a comparison of these assessments against the other candidates. From this process emerges the election campaign, the formal electoral activity focused on winning a seat in office.[ii] During the campaign, media also broadens the scope of comparison and competition. This scrutiny can be especially hard on female candidates as they tend to face greater public evaluation of their leadership style, their personal appearance and their private lives, than their male counterparts (Bashevkin, 2009: 27-43; Trimble, 2005). As such, electoral participation requires competitive and comparative behaviours to achieve office. Combine this with both the socialized male-as-norm ideal of political participants and the absence of clear feed back from electoral outcomes, and a swarm of negative influences may tend to keep women from participating as political candidates. However, one way to increase female participation may be to encourage adolescent sport experiences that expand the socio-cultural and emotional cognition of competitive behaviours and language. The value of doing this would be supported by Lenny's observations.

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[ii] This is not to indicate that all campaigns are solely about winning a seat, as some individual candidates and political parties contest elections simply to promote specific causes or ideas.

Lenny's (1977) work demonstrates that when tasks are gender neutral and feed back is clear, women have similar or higher self-confidence than men in noncompetitive situations. Since this is not the case within our political institutions, female candidates must acquire certain skills to effectively participate in electoral politics. If an adolescent girl participates in a competitive sport, then she may appropriate or internalize the sport as hers. Her competitive participation in the sport may cause her to not gender it as either male or female; she may view the sport as gender-neutral. This appraisal stems from the reinforcement of performance accomplishments, vicarious experience and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1982). Through her own cognitive evaluations, the adolescent competitor strengthens her self-efficacy and reaffirms her understanding that females perform with the same core competencies as males. Like all competitive athletes, she will constantly monitor her self-efficacy to achieve desired outcome expectancies, which involves physiological cognition (Feltz et al., 2008). "Clear and unambiguous" feed back will also occur from coaches, mentors, and teammates, thus contributing to her efficacy expectations by way of socio-cultural cognitive awareness of performance accomplishments and verbal persuasion. If she struggles with her performance, she will initiate new behaviour actions accordingly, thereby further self-evaluating the feed back and measuring success by her own criteria.

Finally, competition for any goal usually requires a certain set of skills. Acquiring the specific skills for the competition – either physical or mental - requires training and preparation. In politics and sport, the basic skill set is the same: confidence in the ability to perform a specific behaviour, proficiency in knowledge of the core competencies and

high self-efficacy. Thus, mastery experiences gained through competitive sport may be invaluable for women in electoral politics, given the inherent similarities in the socio-cultural and emotional cognition of the respective competitions, and the conflict inherent in both pursuits. The knowledge gained from competitive sport experiences may have contributed to their competitive comfort in electoral politics.

Considering cognition in this manner returns the thesis to Bandura's research of self-efficacy. In *Social Learning Theory*, Bandura (1977) discusses the role of cognition in acquiring knowledge. Although he does not specifically define cognition, he provides enough information to assemble the appropriate considerations of efficacy. First, Bandura argues that cognitive events occur through the "four main sources of influence" upon self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal. Of the four sources, vicarious experiences are the most influential (Bandura, 1994: 2). These experiential observations and comparisons between the self and others allow mastery experiences to build upon each other, resulting in each positive experience outcome directly influencing one's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Feltz et al., 2008). Bandura (1997) also states that, "by manipulating symbolically the information that is derived from experience, one can comprehend events and generate new knowledge from them" (160). These "diverse sources of information conveyed vicariously, as well as through social evaluation and direct experience" provide the individual with a series of cognitive events that, when considered together, contribute to self-efficacy beliefs (Feltz, 1988: 437-8). For Bandura, these "cognitive events refer to imagery, to representation of experiences in symbolic form, and to thought processes" (1997: 160). The individual

experiences the symbolic manipulation and the assemblage of knowledge almost exclusively through language and within the context of social and cultural references.

Discussion

The findings of the present work illustrate the significance of the thesis. First, almost 80% (n=175) of survey respondents have competitive sport socialization in their history, with 78% (n=136) of those self-identifying as "competitive" individuals. Compared to the population, the rate of adolescent sport participation is quite astounding. Most subjects also possess aspects of Woshinsky's game typology, by holding the belief that politics is fun, self-identifying an assertive political style, or emphasizing the team aspect of the local council. Respondents appear to recognize the influence media has upon political portrayals and participation of female candidates. Additionally, the fact that very few respondents (6.0%, n=13) expressed negative experiences in their first campaign for local office may indicate that subjects were relatively content in the environment of electoral politics.

The argument may be made that gendering a sport as neutral (or even feminine) is a form of feminist appropriation, whereby the adolescent athlete – who sees the sport as something that she competently achieves – attaches it to her identity. She may gender the activity, but doing so ought to place the sport in an emotional and psychological environment where competition is comfortable and on her own terms. By extension, as girls increase their participation in sports that are traditionally gendered masculine, more of them may appropriate their sport and competitive behaviour. The result is twofold. First, more females ought to envision themselves competently performing something that

boys also perform, even if they never compete directly against males. Second, there ought to be an increase in competitiveness among adolescent girls. Thus, the higher the level of competitiveness, the less other pursuits are negatively influenced by the necessity for competition. By extension, and based in these findings, female candidates with competitive sport experiences may not gender electoral competition as "male" because they see themselves as participatory equals in a competitive venue where they will compete focusing on their own strengths and abilities. However, if they gender electoral politics, they may do so as a feminine pursuit to appropriate it, allowing them to compete with the confidence of their own abilities and with mannerisms and behaviours that are outside the masculine norms we currently identify. Nevertheless, the present results fall within the parameters established by Lenny (1977).

As noted above, Lenny (1977) argues that women have similar or higher self-confidence than men when tasks are gender neutral, feed back is clear and they are in noncompetitive situations. Competitive sport socialization teaches adolescent girls to constantly monitor their actions to achieve desired efficacy outcomes. If their performance is lacking, they will change their behaviour accordingly, thereby responding to their own feed back and measuring success on their own criteria. Competent athletes eventually learn to know their own strengths and weaknesses relative to the strengths and weaknesses of competitors. Mastery experiences in adolescent sport may also instruct girls that they can compete with the necessary intensity, skill and competence to win, even if they do not compete directly against males or in a male-centric domain.

Certainly male participation in sports like hockey, basketball and baseball, far surpasses female involvement, mostly the result of early childhood socialization and media emphasis on the professionalization of these sports. As more girls compete in these sports, they may claim it as theirs thereby demonstrating to themselves that they hold the same core competencies and confidence as males (Heywood and Dworkin, 2003). Finally, competition for any goal usually requires a certain set of skills. Acquiring the specific skills for the competition – either physical or mental - requires training and preparation. In politics and sport, the broad, preparatory skill set is the same: confidence, competence and high internal efficacy. Thus, mastery experiences gained through competitive sport are valuable in electoral politics, given the inherent similarity of competition. For female candidates, competitive sport socialization developed the necessary skills to compete in electoral politics.

The increased participation in adolescent sport over the three age cohorts may be the harbinger for the impact that socialized competitiveness will have on future candidates. Assuming the continued growth in competitive behaviour of adolescent girls as demonstrated by C.F.L.R.I. (Cameron et al., 2007), one ought to expect a proportional rise in the number of female candidates for elected office. The fact that 79.6% of respondents had adolescent sport experience underscores the point that having knowledge of competitive behaviour before campaigning for office is an appropriate, if not necessary, skill-set for female candidates. Of significance for this research is that respondents had a rate of participation in adolescent sport over 100 times more than the population of the same demographic. The strong propensity for candidates to have

competitive sport experience ought to indicate the strength and depth of the relationship between competitive socialization and overcoming the competition barrier. These candidates may have circumvented this barrier because they held either a neutral or positive assessment of electoral competitiveness, an assessment that may have stemmed from the experiential and vicarious knowledge garnered during adolescent sports. Thus, although society may gender an activity (in this case, politics) as masculine, participation means demonstrating core competencies and appropriating it as one's own. Mastery experiences in competitive sport during adolescence may provide female candidates with the socio-cultural knowledge to feel comfortable with the competitive behaviours and activities inherent in our electoral politics.

Prescriptions and Implications

The reader ought to be cautious about the prescription of this work, for it is not suggesting we socialize our daughters in aggressive competitive behaviours. As stated above, encouraging adolescent female participation in competitive sports may increase the level of comfort for women who work in or strive for highly competitive situations or positions. Competitive sport experiences could provide much broader personal and societal benefits than simply increasing the propensity to campaign for elected office. Likewise, if we encourage activities and play that socialize our sons in more compassionate and cooperative behaviours,then we may also witness broader benefits to society. However, for as much as we ought to minimize gender socialization, making it a more a more equitable balance of competition and cooperation or aggression and compassion, this is not the solution for encouraging more electoral participation. For the

traditionally marginalized female or male voices to participate, we must consider

reforming existing political structures and institutions.

One suggestion for creating a more inclusive democracy would be to reform both

the hyper-competitive, winner-take-all S.M.P. electoral system, as well as changing the

adversarial environment of our Westminster parliamentary structure. Lijphart (1981)

compared conflictual and consensual systems, exploring ideas of fairness, openness,

access and representativeness of democratic structures, and his research identified that

most consensual systems tend to encourage broader participation from more diverse

voices in society. Consensual political structures, such as those that use proportional

representation and coalition governments, tend to attract and elect more women to office

than systems using single member plurality and / or majoritarian governments (Rule and

Zimmerman, 1994). Changing the way Canadians elect their representatives, and

reorganizing the manner in which legislative debate occurs ought to create a more

inclusive and participatory democracy. Thus, if competitive socialization is a barrier to

participation, then changing the structure of our electoral politics and nature of our

legislative organization may encourage more women to participate as candidates. Of

course, this is merely one suggestion for reform as the present project could become an

access point for further research both inside and outside of political science.

Although this work incorporates a number of cross-disciplinary themes, it

contributes some new ideas to the domains of political behaviour, political psychology

and political sociology. First, it challenges the traditional approach to behaviour studies,

which tend to examine direct political activities and events that are believed to encourage

political participation. Research in this area tends to consider political information, political interest or party identification as motivators for citizen engagement (for example, see: Gidengil et al., 2004). By contrast, this work focuses on the nonpolitical activity of socialized competitiveness and how it may contribute to social psychological considerations of election campaigns. Looking beyond the "usual suspects" is important for recognizing that nonpolitical activities may also influence political behaviour. As a further deviation, the present work also narrows the idea of *citizen* by studying a group of political participants researchers often ignore: political elites. Given that few researchers study the citizens Lightbody (2006) defines as *political gladiators*, this project also provides a glimpse into the socialized competitive behaviour of political elites. In short, the present research may advance our understanding of behavioral, social and psychological considerations through a multidisciplinary approach to nonpolitical matters. Only additional research can identify the fruits of this labour.

Studying the role of electoral competition further, in whole or in part, opens the possibility of exploring new ideas through a number of sub-fields within political science or other disciplines. For example, given the research frame, this work provides municipal scholars with a very general profile of female candidates for local office, a profile that currently does not exist in Canada. This project could offer political behaviorists insights into the personality traits or conditions of local political elites, a group of citizens even less researched than provincial or federal gladiators. Accordingly, the field of political psychology could use this work as a springboard to further examine the effects of competition - narrowly or widely defined - on political participation. Given the findings

of Lijphart (1981), Rule and Zimmerman (1994) or Dahlerup (2006), this research also offers a base for a comparative analysis between female participants in conflictual and consensual democracies. As mentioned above, political sociologists may also find benefit in this work as it touches upon factors indicating that sport may influence the electoral participation of some citizens. Certainly, scholars of gender have many reference points within this research, including the effects of media and language on political competition. Given the appropriate research method, experts in this field may even identify competition as barrier to participation. Opportunities for more research could also embrace other disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, kinesiology or linguistics. How this research is carried forward is entirely open to those who share in the desire to understand the human condition.

The present work contends that women socialized in competitive sports during their adolescence will exhibit neutral or positive assessment of electoral competition, as the result of competitive experiences in adolescent sports. Their mastery experience with competition will develop the four efficacious skills identified by Feltz et al. (2008), thus strengthening their internal political efficacy, while negating the competition barrier and limiting the belief that politics is a masculine domain. If these women also hold an aptitude for politics, are motivated to serve in office and are relatively free of the other barriers to electoral politics, then they may contest elections. These candidates will place greater emphasis upon their own strengths and abilities and, of more significance, they will not view electoral politics a masculine domain. They will view it as one part of a truly accessible and equitable democratic society.

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Appendix I

Survey Cover Letter
Printed on University of Lethbridge Letterhead

I am a graduate student in Political Science at the University of Lethbridge. My Master's thesis examines women in municipal politics, investigating childhood and adolescent experiences that may have contributed to their participation in local elections. However, to properly investigate the subject, I require your assistance. Enclosed, you will find a survey questionnaire designed to explore these experiences. I hope that you will assist my research by taking the time (approximately 15 minutes) to complete the survey and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will not be subjected to any harm or discomfort and there is no benefit (financial or otherwise) to your participation. *Your name does not, and will not, appear anywhere in my research*. A returned survey automatically transmits your consent for me to use the data and, once received, data cannot be withdrawn. I will present the data as statistical averages, which further mutes individual responses and adds additional anonymity for participants. Although each survey has a serial number, I will use it exclusively for mailing a reminder to participants who have not returned the survey after 30 days. These serial numbers are not part of my data. Only Dr. Jansen and I will have access to the surveys, and the data will remain in electronic form on my personal computer until 31 December 2010. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research should be addressed to the Office of Research Services, University of Lethbridge (Phone: 403-329-2747).

With these points in mind, I sincerely hope that you will assist my research. You may direct questions or comments to either my Supervisor or me. You are also welcome to request an Executive Summary of my research.

I appreciate your time and consideration and anticipate your reply.

Kindest regards,

Jeffrey Coffman   Dr. Harold Jansen
Researcher: 403-393-9976   Supervisor: 403-329-2577
jeff.coffman@uleth.ca   harold.jansen@uleth.ca

Appendix II

Survey Questionnaire

We have designed this survey to gather your opinion on local election campaigns. We ask that you please answer all of the questions. If you require additional space for your responses, please use the back of the last page. The information will be reported in general terms without specific reference to individual responses. Although we request some specific personal data, this information remains confidential and contributes only to the aggregate results.

1) In what year(s) have you campaigned for local office (please list all)?

_____

2) Were you ever a candidate for any other elected office (school board, Commissioner, MLA, MP, et cetera)?

      Yes   No

     2a) If "Yes" what office(s)?

_____

3) When you were considering campaigning for local elected office the ***first time***, did you receive positive encouragement from any elected official(s)?

      Yes – Female officials   Yes – Male officials   Yes - Both   No

4) The ***first time*** you considered campaigning for local elected office, how did you feel about the competitive nature of election campaigns and competing against others?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5) Since your ***first*** campaign for local office, have you encouraged other women to campaign for elected office?

      Yes   No

6) Since your ***first*** campaign for local office, have you ever suggested to other women that they *not* campaign for elected office?

      Yes   No

     6a) If "yes", why?

_____

7) The *first time* you campaigned for local office, what or who was the greatest influence on your decision to become a candidate?

_____

_____

8) The *first time* you campaigned for local office, from where or from whom do you believe you drew your self-confidence to be a candidate?

_____

_____

9) Before your *first* campaign for local office, did you participate in one (or more) community-based or non-profit organization or agency?

      Yes   No

     9a) If "Yes", please specify the type of organization / agency, and your status with the organization as a paid employee (E), board member (M) or volunteer worker (V) (all that apply).

	Type of organization / agency	Status
a) education	_____	E M V
b) environment	_____	E M V
c) social services	_____	E M V
d) cultural / ethnic	_____	E M V
e) arts	_____	E M V
f) sports	_____	E M V
g) community league	_____	E M V
h) religious	_____	E M V
h) other	_____	E M V

How would you rate the following statements: (1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree)

10) "The *first time* I campaigned for local office, I believed myself to be knowledgeable enough to be a competent politician."	1	2	3	4	5
11) "The *first time* I campaigned for local office, I believed that my family obligations might prevent me from effectively carrying out my duties as an elected official."	1	2	3	4	5
12) "The media portrays women in politics in an unbiased manner."	1	2	3	4	5

13) The *first time* you campaigned for local office, were you employed outside the home?

     Yes, full-time   Yes, part-time   No

     13a) If "Yes" what was your occupation?

_____

     13b) Approximately how many hours per week? _____

14) The ***first time*** you campaigned for local office, what was the highest level of education you had completed?

        Grade School   High School   Some College   College
        Diploma Trade School   Some University   University
        Degree
        Graduate / Professional Degree

15) The ***first time*** you campaigned for local office, did you have any children (under 18) living with you?

        Yes   No (go to question 15c)

        15a) If "Yes", how many and what ages were they? ___
        _____
        15b) If "Yes", who was the *primary* caregiver for the child / children?
        Me   Spouse/Partner   Shared with Spouse/Partner

        15c) Did you have a pre-arranged plan to meet familial needs *before* the
campaign?
        Yes   No

        15d) Were you hesitant to campaign for office due to marital / family obligations?
        Yes   No

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = extremely positive experience, 5 = extremely negative experience)

16) How would you rate your ***first*** campaign for local office?	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions deal with your adolescence, herein defined as ages 13 to 18.

17) Where did you live during your adolescence? If more than one location, please list all.

        Town / City: _____
        Province/ State: _____

18) During your adolescence, how frequently did you discuss politics with your parents?

        Often   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

19) During your adolescence, did your parent(s) ever encourage you to "someday" campaign for elected office? If "yes" which parent?

        Yes – mother / father / both   No   We did not discuss politics

20) Had one or both of your parents ever campaigned for any elected office?
        Yes – mother   Yes – father   Yes – both   No

21) During your adolescence, did someone in your community (teacher, leader, politician, friends, et cetera) ever encourage you to "someday" campaign for elected office?
        Yes (please specify) _____   No

22) During your adolescence, did you campaign for an elected office on student council?
        Yes   No

23) During your adolescence, did you participate in any team or individual sports?
        Yes   No (If "No" go to question 34)

24) During your adolescence, in what sports did you participate? Please list in order from the "***most active***" – you committed time and energy to the sport – to the "***least active***" – casual participation. Please include the ***age(s) when you participated*** in the sport.
_____

_____

25) In which of these sports did you participate through a school activity or program? (Please list all that apply) (if "none" go to question 28)
_____

_____

26) What was the approximate population of the community in which the school was located?
        <1,000   1,000 to 5,000   5,000 to 10,000   10,000 to 20,000
        20,000 to 50,000   50,000 to 100,000   100,000 to 500,000   >500,000

27) Were these sports primarily *intramural* (competition was against other students *in your school*) or *intermural* (competition was against students *in other schools*)?
        Intramural   Intermural

28) Which of these sports did you participate in through a community program or organization (please list all that apply)? (if "none" go to question 31)
_____

_____

29) What was the approximate population of the community where you played the sport (s)?
        <1,000   1,000 to 5,000   5,000 to 10,000   10,000 to 20,000
        20,000 to 50,000   50,000 to 100,000   100,000 to 500,000   >500,000

30) Were these sports primarily *house league* (competition against other adolescents in your community), or *civic* (competition against other adolescents in other communities)?

     House League   Civic

31) In which sport(s) were you *competitive* (i.e. you actively and consciously competed against yourself or others, individually or as part of a team, with your *main intent* being to win the event, tournament or season)? (Please list all that apply) _____

_____

32) Did you ever win a championship, tournament or season title while participating in a sport, whether through school or the community, on a team or as an individual? If "yes" please list all. _____

_____

33) Did you compete in a sport that you perceived to be specifically gendered (i.e. "I participated in a sport that *mostly* males played" or "I participated in a sport that *mostly* females played")?

     Yes   No

33a) If "yes" which sport(s) did you perceive to be specifically gendered?

You perceived as "masculine"	
You perceived as "feminine"	

34) During your adolescence, did you compete in non-athletic activities (arts, science, 4H, etc.)?

     Yes   No

34a) If "yes" please specify**: _____**

35) Please circle the answer that **best** describes your original motivation:
"The ***first time*** I campaigned for local office, I did so because…
a) … I enjoyed creating public policy."
b) … I wanted to be a leader in my community."
c) … I wanted to be "at the table" making decisions, although I did not want a leadership role."
d) … I believed I worked harder than did many on the current local council."
e) … I better represented the general opinions of the local community."
f) … I represented alternative opinions and viewpoints in the local community."
g) … I saw the existing council as corrupt, unprincipled or lacking in ethics."
h) … I enjoyed the strategy and tactics of politics."

How would you rate the following statements (1 = "strongly agree", 5 = "strongly disagree"):

	1	2	3	4	5
36) Most local politicians tend to focus on climbing the political ladder.	1	2	3	4	5
37) The local community ought to acknowledge the positive contributions of local councilors.	1	2	3	4	5
38) I can accomplish my goals without the help of other councilors.	1	2	3	4	5
39) I tend to echo the popular sentiments found in my local community.	1	2	3	4	5
40) I could describe my political style as "assertive."	1	2	3	4	5
41) Politics is fun.	1	2	3	4	5
42) I tend to respect the local representatives in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
43) I tend to hold "contempt" for the local representatives in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
44) It is important for a local council to work as a team and members to be team players.	1	2	3	4	5

45) What Local political party do you lean towards? _____

46) What Provincial political party do you lean towards? _____

47) What Federal political party do you lean towards? _____

48) What year were you born? _____

Appendix III

CivicInfo BC **Electronic Newsletter Announcements**

First Announcement: Survey mail-out.
Posted on-line: Friday 15 May 2009 for 4 consecutive weeks.
CivicInfo BC weekly electronic newsletter under *"News and Announcements"*

Research Survey for Women in Municipal Politics

A graduate student at the University of Lethbridge is working on a Master's thesis that examines women in municipal politics. On Tuesday May 19th, a self-administered survey will begin arriving by mail, to all the female candidates (elected and unelected) that participated in the 2008 Local Government election process. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and includes a pre-addressed, pre-stamped reply envelope. The researcher hopes that all recipients will take the time to complete the survey, which will provide insights into the unique experiences of women who campaign for local office.

Any questions may be directed to the researcher, Jeffrey Coffman (jeff.coffman@uleth.ca), the research supervisor, Dr. Harold Jansen (harold.jansen@uleth.ca) or the Office of Research Services (re: Protocol 835) at the University of Lethbridge (403-329-2747).

_____

Second Announcement: Reminder of Survey.
Posted on-line: Friday 19 June 2009 for 4 consecutive weeks.
CivicInfo BC weekly electronic newsletter under *"News and Announcements"*

Research Survey for Women in Municipal Politics

A graduate student at the University of Lethbridge is working on a Master's thesis that examines women in municipal politics. In mid-May, a self-administered survey was sent to all the female candidates (elected and not-elected) who participated in the 2008 Local Government election process. Although many of the candidates have returned their surveys, a notice was mailed this week reminding participants to complete and mail the questionnaire at their earliest convenience.

If you did not receive a survey or you have simply misplaced the original, an electronic version is available. To request an additional survey, or to ask any questions, please contact the researcher, Jeffrey Coffman, at jeff.coffman@uleth.ca (or 403-393-9976).

Appendix IV

Survey Reminder
Mailed 15 June 2009.
Sent as a 5.5" X 4" (approximate) postcard.

Last month, a survey questionnaire was sent to your address. As I have not yet received the completed survey, I wanted to make sure there were no problems with it. If you have already mailed your questionnaire, thank you very much. If you have not mailed the questionnaire, I would appreciate it if you would assist my research by completing it and returning it as soon as possible. If you did not receive a survey, have misplaced it, or require additional assistance, please contact me at jeff.coffman@uleth.ca or 403-393-9976. An electronic version of the survey is also available.

Thank you.

Jeffrey Coffman
c/o Dr. H. Jansen
Dept. of Political Science
University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4